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## Gay content restored in Holocaust booklet

*Gay material was initially deleted. Corporate sponsors in Utah say they were just following orders*

By Jennie McKnight

SALT LAKE CITY — In the wake of a flurry of publicity and public outcry, the corporate sponsors of an exhibit about the Holocaust restored a section of an educational booklet that deals with homosexuality. The educational materials were produced for public school teachers who were encouraged to use them in preparation for the exhibit, "The World of Anne Frank 1929-1945," scheduled to open in Salt Lake City March 25. The photographic exhibit was organized by the Anne Frank Foundation in Amsterdam and has toured internationally.

Accounts vary about how and why the three-page section on homosexuality was deleted in the first place. Officials at Geneva Steel, the Utah company that sponsored the exhibit, have said the State Office of Education told them to delete the section. James Moss, the state's School Superintendent, has said the deletion was a result of a misunderstanding.

Bonnie Morgan, Coordinator of Curriculum at the State Office of Education, told *GCN* that a question arose about the section when Geneva Steel submitted a copy of the materials for review by the Office of Education. Because a Board of Education policy prohibits teaching the "acceptance of or advocacy of homosexuality as a desirable or acceptable sexual adjustment or lifestyle," a staff member at the Office of Education "suggested to a person at Geneva Steel that a paragraph" of the materials in question "might be a problem."

The portion of the materials that concerned the staff member, according to Morgan, was that which discussed present day homosexuality. Of the three pages dealing with homosexuality, two describe the Nazi persecution of gay men and the origin of the pink triangle designating gay prisoners in concentration camps. The third page describes the reclaiming of the pink triangle as a symbol of the modern gay liberation movement. It was the content of the third page that the staff member thought might violate the education policy, which was adopted in 1974, according to Morgan.

But the staff member did not tell Geneva Steel to delete the section, according to Morgan. "A person at Geneva Steel interpreted the message a bit differently," she said.

The story of the possible deletions broke in the local media on March 11, when the *Salt Lake Tribune* quoted Geneva Steel's Kathy Bryson saying "We were specifically told [by the Office of Education] never to mention the homosexuals." In the same story, Moss said that he didn't make that statement, but that he didn't oppose it. He added that "homosexuality is not a major feature of the Holocaust," and that "The major focus, what needs to be focused on continuously was the religious and cultural prejudice." Moss told the paper it is possible to teach children they should not be bigoted without having to include all groups

that were the targets of the Nazis. In addition to the section on homosexuality, the original 38 pages of materials included information about Nazi persecution of Jews and Gypsies, as well as Black people and people with disabilities.

The day after the story appeared, March 12, Moss called a press conference to announce that there had been a "misunderstanding" about the materials. Robert Austin of the Gay and Lesbian Community Council of Utah attended the press conference. At that time, according to Austin, those present did not know what, if any, portion of the materials had been deleted. Moss indicated that if anything had been deleted, it was probably the last page, according to Austin.

But immediately after the press conference, Austin and others learned that the materials printed by Geneva Steel had deleted all three pages about homosexuality. An ad-hoc coalition of gay and lesbian, religious and civil liberties groups met quickly to plan a response to the deletions. The group decided to demand that Geneva Steel do another mailing to teachers including deleted materials. The group also decided to encourage people to "witness against intolerance" by wearing pink triangles on the opening day of the exhibit. The coalition also called for a rally and an ecumenical memorial service on the opening day to remember all people killed in the Holocaust, according to Austin.

Austin said Geneva Steel called him after the meeting and apologized for the deletions. He said the company told him they would send out a new packet to the teachers that included the deleted section, along with a letter explaining what happened.

"I feel great," said Austin. "We got everything we needed, and we got great support from lots of segments of the community." Austin also said the controversy itself had been educational. As a result of the publicity, he said, "lots more people in Utah know that gay and lesbian people were killed by Nazis, and lots more people know that the Anne Frank exhibit is coming to Utah."

Austin said plans for the events scheduled on the exhibit's opening day are moving forward, and that he is not aware of any negative response to them so far. Mary Kay Lazarus of Geneva Steel told *GCN* that the company has sent out the complete packets and has received no negative feedback about them at this point. She said the exhibit is "a wonderful opportunity for all of us in Utah."

"Probably we should never have been involved in the first place," said the Office of Education's Morgan. "Now our position is that if Geneva Steel wants to send that to the schools, then it's up to the schools to bring it up."

□ filed from Boston

# OUT write 90

## A FIRST-OF-ITS-KIND POLITICAL ACTION

## Northampton debates bisexual question

*A decision to remove 'bisexual' from the title of this year's pride march led to dispute*

By Chris Nealon

NORTHAMPTON, Mass. — About 250 women and men gathered March 15 at the Unitarian Church to voice opinions about the January decision to remove the word "bisexual" from the title of this year's pride celebration. That decision has sparked much debate here, primarily between lesbians upset about not being represented at last year's march and bisexuals arguing for inclusion in the event. The 1990 Northampton Lesbian and Gay Pride March is slated for May.

Jeff Jerome, who has helped organize past marches, began the meeting with a brief history. According to Jerome, last year's decision to add "bisexual" to the title, "Lesbian and Gay Pride," was made at a September 1988 meeting.

In an attempt to reflect the diversity of the gay, lesbian and bisexual communities in western Massachusetts, said Jerome, the organizing committee for the 1989 march adopted the theme, "Stepping Forward, Stepping Out." The committee came up with a march agenda that would include speeches on the state's gay and lesbian civil rights bill, the impact of AIDS among women and communities of color, local deaf lesbian and gay communities, and the work of the local Valley Bisexual Network.

"It was no one's intent not to have lesbian speakers," said Jerome. "Things fell through."

J. Mary Sorrell, a local lesbian who had proposed reading a lesbian herstory at the 1989 march, told the gathering that she had been turned down by the march committee for being too "exclusionary." She said she was "surprised" by the committee's response to her proposal, "because I've done a lot of coalition work with gay men."

### Lesbians mobilize to restructure

Many lesbians who were upset both by the 1989 list of speakers and by the inclusion of "Bisexual" in the march title mobilized to

have an impact on this year's march. They attended early organizational meetings at which policy changes were made. At a December meeting, which was open to all members of the community, a non-binding vote removed "Bisexual" from the march title. That decision was cemented by a binding vote at a January 10 meeting which was also open.

At the January 24 meeting, organizers established a steering committee whose members must be lesbians or gay men from the march's work committees. This move prevented bisexual participation on the steering committee, but work committees remained open to anyone interested.

This restructuring generated heated debate within the Northampton community, as well as a flurry of angry letters to local publications. To address the conflict, an ad hoc group, in consultation with the march planning committee, called the March 15 meeting. At the beginning of the meeting facilitator Felice Yeskel of the University of Massachusetts Program for Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Concerns explained that this year's decision had been finalized and then opened up two and a half hours of lively and sometimes furious discussion.

In a statement distributed at the meeting, march organizers asserted that "we recognize the oppression of bisexual people in our society and acknowledge the significant overlap in our struggles against heterosexism and homophobia." The organizers described the dropping of "Bisexual" from the 1990 march title as "a statement of political affiliation — not a personal rejection of bisexual people."

Sorrell offered the most explicit defense of this position, remarking that when bisexuals are listed among march participants, "everything gets watered down and suddenly we all become 'gay people'." Others suggested having separate marches, and one

Continued on page 7



Quote of the week

“Anything that shows the goodness, the wholesomeness, the beauty and the truth of the American people.”

— *Republican Rep. Dana Rohrabacker (Calif.), responding to a question about his definition of “good” art. Rohrabacker, who was quoted in the New York Times, made his remarks at a press conference held March 20, the same day hundreds of artists and arts supporters rallied in Washington to protest the restrictions placed on grants given by the National Endowment for the Arts.*

Court extends rights of gay life partners

NEW YORK — An appellate court ruled March 13 that gay people who lose a life partner should not be evicted from rent stabilized apartments in New York City. The decision is an extension of a July 1989 ruling which protected surviving gay partners from eviction from a rent controlled apartment. (See *GCN*, July 16, 1989.)

In last year’s *Braschi v. Stahl*, New York’s highest court said that a gay couple is the legal equivalent of a family in regard to protection from eviction from a rent controlled apartment. “In extending *Braschi* to rent stabilization, the court has protected thousands of tenants from eviction,” said William Rubenstein, staff counsel to the American Civil Liberties Union’s Lesbian and Gay Rights Project, which filed a friend of the court brief.

The recent case, *East 10th Street Associates v. Estate of Stuart Goldstein*, involved a 14-year relationship between two men. After Goldstein died of AIDS in 1987, the apartment building where he and his life partner, Robert Wells, had lived for 10 years tried to evict Wells.

Rubenstein said that the “decision should put to rest once and for all the landlords’ attempts to discriminate against lesbian and gay couples.” Following the *Braschi* ruling, the Division of Housing and Community Renewal, the agency in charge of both rent control and rent stabilization, changed its rent stabilization regulations in order to protect gay life partners. Although New York landlords challenged the changes with a lawsuit in November, the ACLU said that the *Goldstein* ruling may eliminate that challenge.

□ Kelly Gaines

FDA charged with racism

MIAMI — More than 5,000 Haitian-Americans rallied outside offices of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) here in early March to protest new FDA recommendations that all Haitians be barred from donating blood. Protesters, who slowed traffic around Miami International Airport, chanted “Racists,” in response to the FDA’s proposed regulations, according to the *New York Times*. The rally was organized by the Haitian Coalition for Health, which includes groups from Dade, Palm Beach and Broward Counties.

The new policy, which is non-binding but is reportedly being complied with by local blood banks, eliminates a previous time limit restricting blood donations by Haitian emigres. The previous ban included Haitians who had emigrated after 1977. According to the *Times* article, the new recommendations were issued because “for Haitians the primary route for AIDS transmission is through heterosexual intercourse, making it more difficult to identify people at high risk of AIDS.”

□ Jennie McKnight

Sodomy repeal fails in Atlanta

ATLANTA — An effort to repeal this state’s sodomy law failed Feb. 2. Gay and lesbian activists condemned the homophobic remarks made by the speaker of the House and vowed to push for repeal again in 1991.

The bill, which was sponsored by Cynthia McKinney (D-Atlanta), would have exempted all consenting adults from prosecution under the sodomy law. According to *Gaze*, a

gay paper in Tennessee, McKinney’s father, Billy (D-Atlanta), had introduced legislation criminalizing gay sex only. Cynthia McKinney’s bill was voted out of the House Judiciary Committee and reached the floor, but it was amended to resemble her father’s legislation. The watered down bill was defeated by the Georgia House, 64-44.

Prior to the vote, House Speaker Tom Murphy was quoted in the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* as saying that he “didn’t know enough about sodomy to talk about it.” Following a Jan. 8 demonstration against sodomy laws in Atlanta, Murphy was quoted as saying, “Those gay people. I didn’t go around them. I didn’t want to get too close.”

“Tom Murphy and other lawmakers don’t want to get too close to voting against a repressive sodomy law,” said Cathy Woolard, president of the Georgia American Civil Liberties Union’s Gay and Lesbian Rights Chapter. “But they’ll have to, because we’ll be meeting with legislative sponsors to go over the vote count and plan our strategy for 1991,” said Woolard, adding, “We’ll be back.”

Following the defeat of the repeal effort, *The Atlanta Constitution* criticized Murphy, saying, “Ignorance is a fully plausible explanation for [the sodomy] vote, though it is no comfort to be confronted so brazenly by a legislator boasting of his stupidity.”

□ Kelly Gaines

Medical journal predicts ‘end of AIDS’

WASHINGTON — A March 16 *Journal of American Medicine* article published by two noted epidemiologists projected that in all, there will be no more than 200,000 AIDS cases in the U.S. The prediction drew harsh criticism from AIDS activists and health officials.

“There is no evidence that the HIV epidemic is ending. Reports in important journals which herald ‘the end of AIDS’ do incredible damage by contributing to people’s false sense of security and their desire to deny that HIV will ever affect them,” said Larry Kessler, executive director of Boston’s AIDS Action Committee. Kessler, who sits on the National Commission on AIDS, made his remarks from Washington, D.C., where the Commission is currently meeting.

Other Commission members joined him in expressing concern about the article’s lack of attention to modes of transmission of AIDS. “Farr’s Law Applied to AIDS Projections” was written by Dennis Bregman, a University of Southern California researcher, and Dr. Alexander Langmuir, former chief epidemiologist at the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). In order to estimate the rate of HIV infection, the authors used a model developed in 1840 to study measles. “It’s like comparing apples and eggs,” said Kessler.

The study’s prediction of 200,000 AIDS cases is far below CDC estimates, which some AIDS activists consider conservative. The CDC reports 121,645 AIDS cases as of Jan. 31, and projects that the 200,000 mark will be passed within 12 months. In addition to those who currently have AIDS, the CDC estimates that more than one million people in the U.S. are now infected with HIV, a virus thought by many to cause AIDS.

□ Laura Briggs

Mass. drug reimbursement plan moves to new office

BOSTON — The HIV Drug Reimbursement Plan, which provides financial assistance for the payment of several expensive HIV-related drugs, is now operating out of new offices at 338 Newbury Street in Boston. The new telephone numbers are (617) 262-0089 for people within the immediate area and (800) 228-2714 for all others.

Started in November of 1987, the program provides money for AZT, aerosolized pentamidine and alpha-interferon. The program is intended to help individuals who either have no insurance or insufficient coverage. For more information, contact the HIV Drug Reimbursement Plan.

□ Kelly Gaines

Austrian dykes force company to print pro-gay posters

VIENNA — Dyke activists here recently won a two-year battle against a printing company which had refused to print a poster reading, “Lesbians are Everywhere.” The company, GEWISTA, had based its refusal on an Austrian law that bans the “public advocacy” of sodomy, according to Chicago’s *Outlines*. Now, however, the women, who make up the lesbian action group of Vienna’s Homosexual Initiative, have run into another wall: although the posters have been printed, the Department of Transportation is refusing to display them on buses, trams and subways.

□ Kelly Gaines



Sydney celebrates women’s day

SYDNEY, Australia — At least 5000 people marched through the streets of Sydney March 10 in celebration of International Women’s Day. There appeared to be an extremely high degree of lesbian visibility this year, with at least a dozen separate lesbian organizations represented by contingents and banners. However, compared to other recent gatherings, there seemed to be fewer Aboriginal women and fewer women from Central and South American backgrounds. Still, the event was as colorful, noisy and celebratory as usual.

□ Kendall Lovett

‘Heart Strings’ pulls in big bucks

BOSTON — The national tour of *Heart Strings*, a musical production billed as “Evenings of hope for the healing of AIDS,” pulled into the Opera House here March 18. The show’s touring cast of 20 singers and dancers was augmented by local groups such as the Boston Gay Men’s Chorus, the Harvard Glee Club, the Radcliffe Choral Society, and the Harvard-Radcliffe Kuumba Singers.

*Heart Strings*, which premiered in Atlanta in 1986, was conceived by the Design Industries Foundation for AIDS, a coalition of members and friends of the architectural, furnishings, fashion, package, graphic, lighting, and floral design industries. The production has raised over \$2.5 million dollars nationally, grossing about \$250,000 in Boston. Proceeds are distributed in each city *Heart Strings* visits. In Boston, the money will go to the AIDS Action Committee, the Fenway Community Health Center, the Hospice at Mission Hill and the Multicultural AIDS Coalition.

The next stop for *Heart Strings* will be New York City on March 26.

□ Christopher Wittke

Violence against gay people rampant in Venezuela

CARACAS, Venezuela — The recent murder of a lesbian brought the total number of anti-gay murders in this capital city up to 15 within the past three years. According to *Heartland*, a gay publication in the midwestern United States, a man entered a lesbian bar and murdered a lesbian during a lesbian marriage ceremony.

Activist Edgar Carrasco, founder of Citizen’s Action Against AIDS here, said that Venezuela’s legal system assumes that

“gay behavior” leads to “criminal behavior.” Given this, said Carrasco, “It is no surprise that the country’s gays and lesbians lack any feeling of pride or solidarity.”

□ Kelly Gaines

Latina lesbian writers needed for new book

SAN ANTONIO, Texas — ELLAS, the Texas statewide network for Lesbianas Latinas, is calling for submissions of fiction, poetry, short stories, recipes, cartoons and artwork for a book to be published in the summer of 1990. The group also welcomes submissions in Spanish, English or both for publication in its newsletter, “ELLAS DICEN.” Submissions and questions should be directed to ELLAS, P.O. Box 1175, San Antonio, Texas, 78294.

□ John Hubert

Homophobic judge garners support for uncontested race

DALLAS — Despite a censure from a state judicial commission, Judge Jack Hampton is running unopposed for reelection here. So far, Hampton has acquired \$30,000 for his campaign, the largest amount raised for an uncontested judicial race in Dallas County this year, according to the *Advocate*.

Hampton came under fire from gay and lesbian activists last year when he told a reporter that he had given a lighter sentence to a man who murdered two gay men because the victims were gay. Last November, the Texas State Commission on Judicial Conduct censured Hampton, the strongest possible action short of removing him from office. (See *GCN*, Dec. 3, 1989.)

□ Kelly Gaines

Welfare rights activist announces bid for governor

BOSTON — Welfare rights activist Dorothy Stevens declared her candidacy as a democrat for the Massachusetts governor’s race Feb. 26.

Stevens, former president of the Massachusetts Coalition of Basic Human Needs and current vice-president of the National Welfare Rights Union, has worked on the “Up to Poverty” campaign to bring welfare benefits up to the federal poverty level.

Stevens, who is pro-choice, advocates a \$10 minimum wage, new taxes aimed at corporations, a public school system that is not “dehumanizing and demoralizing” to students, and decent, affordable housing for all state residents, according to her campaign literature.

Stevens faces an uphill battle in the 1990 governor’s race. The *Boston Globe* barely stopped short of ridiculing her campaign in a Feb. 27 story about her announcement. The local newspaper described Stevens as “unapologetic about her years on public assistance despite some college education,” although she is a Masters’ degree candidate at the University of Massachusetts/Boston. The story further noted that she “insists that hers is no mere symbolic candidacy,” while pointing out that her newly formed campaign committee has yet to raise any money.

□ Laura Briggs

Correction

The March 11 article “Fighting the repeal effort” should have said that the Gay Rights Law went into effect on Feb. 15, not Jan. 15. The article also incorrectly stated that the Gay and Lesbian Service Center would be the location for the March 24 meeting.

GCN regrets these errors.



# High school students win condom fight

*Following prolonged and heated discussions, a Cambridge school committee okays the distribution of condoms to students*

By Laura Briggs

CAMBRIDGE, Mass — In a victory for local high school student activists, a sub-committee of the Cambridge School Committee voted 4-3 March 20 to allow the distribution of condoms through the public high school's Teen Health Center in order to slow the spread of AIDS. The move was opposed by Rev. Earl W. Jackson's Exodus Movement, a conservative Black Christian group well-known in the Boston area for its anti-abortion and anti-gay rights positions.

"We're pleased with the result of the decision, but we were hoping for a bigger margin. We failed to educate the other three members," said Emily Case, a Cambridge Rindge and Latin School (CRLS) student and Peer Leader.

Two student groups, the AIDS Peer Leaders and the Student Action Committee, worked together to win school committee approval of condom availability at CRLS. In late December, the Student Peer Leaders began distributing condoms and safer sex information to their fellow students as part of their efforts to teach other students about AIDS (see *GCN*, Feb. 11, 1990).

Meanwhile, the Student Action Committee had already begun circulating a petition calling for the distribution of condoms to prevent unwanted teen pregnancy. They presented the petition with about 375 parent and student signatures to the school committee Jan. 26, and requested a hearing about the subject.

"Our concerns are the threat of the virus and student behavior," said Case of the Peer Leaders. "We were educating people about unsafe sex, about misconceptions about people with AIDS. But we still heard the same stories about people having unsafe sex. Students weren't taking the step to go across the street to buy condoms. Whether that's wrong, whether that's stupid, is not our concern."

At a lively public hearing March 13, which had been requested by both groups, participants debated the issue. The four-hour hearing was attended by about 175 parents, students, health workers, and activists. The mostly pro-condom crowd booed those opponents who advanced homophobic arguments against condom availability.

In one particularly heated moment, a Cambridge parent, Colin Rompe, criticized the testimony of Ed Cyr, whose brother died of AIDS. "This man gets up there and tells you his brother died of AIDS in New York — but he didn't tell you why he got AIDS," said Rompe, who was interrupted by booing. Another parent, Cooper Thompson, shouted from the audience, "Don't do it, don't invoke homophobia."

"They were basically blaming gay men for AIDS," said Meredith Bellows of the Student Action Committee of CRLS, who worked to bring the hearing about. "That was not what the hearing was for. It was a bad representation of the other side," she said.

Student activists found wide support among officials, health workers, AIDS activists, and parents attending. The Commissioner of Health and Hospitals for Cambridge, Dr. Melvin Chalfen, read a prepared statement supporting condom availability in the school as a legitimate and important health measure. Cambridge Hospital, which administers the Teen Health Center at the school under a lease from the school, provided testimony from its policy-makers, doctors, and board members in favor of condoms. Other groups testifying for the proposal included the Cambridge AIDS Task Force and the AIDS Commission in Somerville.

## The opposition

Rev. Jackson and his supporters, all of them Black, constituted most of the dissenters from the pro-condom majority, raising concerns about the existence of a racial divide over the issue. In addition, all of the Black parents from Cambridge who spoke opposed the proposal. "Some parents who are part of our Christian Exodus Movement have expressed concern to me about this," said Jackson, who lives in Medford. "Passing out condoms undermines the values their children are taught at home.

Those children have a right to come to school in an environment where they are not being pushed to have sex," he said.

"In the beginning, God created Adam and Eve, not Adam and Steve. That why we have AIDS, because of fornication," said Jackson follower Bellum. "Get the gays and lezzies and tell them that their sin is killing them," she said.

At one point, a parent testifying in favor of condoms referred to opponents as "those kind of people," and Jackson shouted from the audience, "Do you mean Black people?"

Jasmine Donaldson, a Black student in favor of condom availability, said, "The Black community was represented by just one sector. Many Black people support this."

In an apparent effort to change the perception of Black community opposition to condom distribution, the African-American Advisory Group of the Cambridge AIDS Task Force spoke at the March 20 meeting. They spoke in favor of condom availability immediately before the favorable vote.

## A health decision

Lynn Shoeff, director of the Teen Health Center, believes that the outcome of the school committee vote was made possible because the Teen Health Center is administered by Cambridge Hospital, not the school, enabling school committee members to view the decision as relating strictly to health issues. "I'm very, very pleased about the decision," she said.

Henrietta Davis, chair of the Subcommittee on Student Health, agreed that the sexuality of students was not the issue. "The decision was made as a health decision, not to encourage students to be sexually active," she said.

Shoeff said she expects that the decision will be implemented in the next few weeks. Condoms will be available during certain hours, and the first time a student requests a condom, the student will be required to attend a counseling session. In that session, students will be offered information on how to use condoms, and encouraged to talk about their sexual decision making. According to Schoff, gay students will be treated "just the same way as straight students." She added, "Now, we're going to be able to provide some kids with some protection."

## Student activists

The student activists who fought for this proposal came together in very different ways. The two groups, the Peer Leaders and the Student Action Committee, were virtually unaware of each other until they both came to the attention of the Cambridge School Committee.

At the high school, the peer leadership program provides training to students about issues such as dating violence and substance abuse. After the training, students are expected to teach their classmates about these subjects. Last spring, the school offered a 20-hour course on AIDS for the first time. "One of the things that really hit me was how preventable this virus is," said Case.

She said that her group went to classrooms to talk about AIDS, but felt that was not enough. They began to hand out envelopes with condoms, and two fact sheets, one about AIDS, and one on condom use. She said that while neither of the fact sheets discussed homosexuality, "It was an issue we were willing to take on. We'd talk about homosexuality in classrooms. They're high school students — there are a lot of misconceptions, even though our high school has a support group for gay students," Case said.

Bellows said that the Student Action Committee came together when some of them got involved with the Cambridge Rainbow Coalition's student empowerment program. "When we got together and started talking about what problems were important to us, we picked teen pregnancy. We talked about violence and drug abuse, but we decided teen pregnancy was something we could do something about immediately, by getting condoms at the Teen Health Clinic," said Bellows. □



Rod Johnson

# Second D.C. skinhead sentenced

*Activists criticize the lack of coverage by mainstream media*

By John Zeh

WASHINGTON — The skinhead who bragged about his "hatred for gays" and said he'd have had no remorse if a gay waiter had died after a brutal gang attack was sentenced to 12-36 years in prison March 12. Gay, lesbian, and human rights activists praised the punishment, saying they are glad the ugly criminal case is over, but also criticized mainstream media for ignoring or delaying coverage of the sentencing hearings.

Mark Hyder said he was sorry, but shuffled his feet, stammered, and replied he wanted to seem "macho" when DC Superior Court Judge Robert M. Scott asked why he had made hateful, vicious remarks to the press and a probation officer.

Scott sentenced Hyder, 18, to 10-30 years for assault with intent to kill while armed and a consecutive 2-6 years for armed robbery for the 1988 attack on Rodney Johnson.

"It's appropriately commensurate with the crime's viciousness," said Paula Etelbrick, legal director of Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund. "They left a

gay man nearly dead and have ruined his life," she said.

Scott sentenced Hyder as an adult after carefully studying a U.S. Youth Act review which gives juveniles special consideration. In January, Scott sentenced Hyder's partner, David McCall, 19, to a similar prison term for attempted murder, but added 3-4 more years for the robbery charge because of McCall's prior assault, ironically, on another skinhead. (See *GCN*, Jan. 28)

Hyder and McCall will be eligible for parole in 12 and 15 years, respectively, minus up to about four years in "good time" earned for acceptable behavior inside prison.

A jury unanimously convicted the pair after a spree of anti-gay attacks and robberies 18 months ago near popular Dupont Circle, which homophobes call "the fruit loop," and Rock Creek Park. They were arrested by DC police who had been trailing them and found bloody Louisville Slugger baseball bats in their car.

A third gang member, Richard "Craig"

Continued on page 7

# Lesbian granted right to see lover

*Judge says that prison rules prohibiting same-sex visitors were 'arbitrary'*

By Jennie McKnight

PITTSBURGH — A federal judge ruled March 14 that a Pennsylvania county jail could not prevent a lesbian prisoner from receiving visits from her lover. The judge issued an injunction against the jail's policy of denying visitation to lovers of lesbian and gay prisoners, which was ruled unconstitutional. (See *GCN* Jan. 14, 1990.)

The lesbian prisoner who brought the suit, known only as Jane Doe, was denied visits from her lover last summer by Blair County Prison Warden Gary Sparks. In a letter to Sparks requesting the visits, Doe wrote, "I love her and she loves me and I sure would like to see someone I love.... She is all I got." Sparks denied the request, saying the prison "can't condone such relationships." His decision was upheld by the Blair County Prison Board.

Doe claimed that the policy was discriminatory because heterosexual prisoners were allowed visits from their opposite-sex lovers. Although lesbian and gay prisoners face many types of discrimination inside prisons, the explicit policy at the Blair County Prison was thought to be the only one of its kind in the country until it was struck down.

At the December 14 hearing about the suit, Sparks testified that when he denied Doe's request, he thought homosexual conduct was illegal in Pennsylvania. Jere Krakoff, a lawyer associated with the Pittsburgh branch of the American Civil Liber-

ties Union (ACLU) who represented Doe, told *GCN* that Sparks' assumption was erroneous. Pennsylvania's sodomy statute was struck down by the state supreme court in 1980. In addition, the ACLU argued that the 1975 executive order banning discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation establishes the state's position on discrimination, even if the Blair County Prison is not bound by the order.

In declaring the policy unconstitutional, the judge, D. Brooks Smith, wrote, "The logical connection between the Blair County visitation policy as it is interpreted and the asserted goals of maintaining internal security and safety for inmates is so remote as to be arbitrary."

"We're very pleased that after all these months Jane Doe will finally be able to visit with her lover," Krakoff said in response to the judge's order. He said that Doe herself was also very pleased with the decision.

"It's a pity that in 1990 you have to go into a federal court to secure a right that should be self-evident," he added.

"This decision means an end to a policy under which lesbian and gay prisoners were second-class persons within the prison," said Nan Hunter, Director of the ACLU's Lesbian and Gay Rights Project. "It represents another court's recognition that the Constitution's protection of equal rights must prevail over irrational justice," she said.

□ filed from Boston



# Dear Readers,

Cast your mind back... The Supreme Court had just handed down the *Hardwick* decision upholding Georgia's sodomy law. The Meese Commission had just issued its report on pornography. Barbara Smith had just gone to bat for Black feminism in the face of backlash against *The Color Purple* on *Tony Brown's Journal*. The historic March on Washington by lesbians and gay men wouldn't take place for another year. And ACT UP didn't even exist yet. It was the summer of 1986. It was the last time GCN raised its subscription rates.

We know you count on GCN for timely national news and features articles — weekly coverage you can't get anywhere else. And we want to keep the paper coming to you.

Unlike most gay (and straight) news sources, GCN is a non-profit, community-based paper. Our volunteers are involved with everything from writing news and features, to mailing out the paper, to making crucial policy decisions for the organization. And we rely on our readers — people like you — to fill us in on breaking news and to write letters and "Speaking Outs" for our editorial pages.

We are committed to making GCN financially accessible to as many people as possible. Yet, in the nearly four years since our last subscription rate increase, we have faced rising costs from the many businesses we depend upon to produce GCN. Postage, rent, health insurance, printing, envelope, phone and utility costs are some of the areas where we've had substantial increases. We have managed to raise staff salaries in the last four years, but wages remain \$200/week for all full-time collective positions.

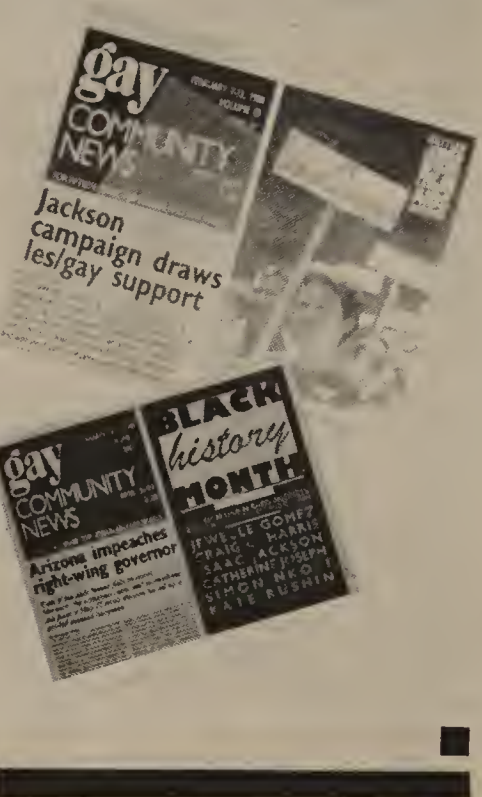
What this adds up to is that we must raise

subscription rates. Though we would rather not have to take this step, the decision is based on a realistic assessment of our goals and needs.

The new rates will take effect May 1, 1990. As the ad below details, we're offering everyone the chance to take advantage of the old rates now. Get it while the getting's good!

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# A view from this wheelchair

By Mary Frances Platt

It is on the tail of Sara Atatamuir's death and with friendly repeated reminders from allies that I attempt to write about the East Coast Lesbian Festival, held Sept. 1, 1989.

*Fear* envelopes me as I begin to write — a form of expression that I have never felt comfortable with. It is with the knowledge that it is important to record our struggles as lesbian warriors with disabilities that I now attempt to put my own personal experience into words. *Fear* of what women will say, having to feel again women's hatred and anger. *Fear* of getting sick all over again. It has taken me three months to physically recover from the festival process; the sickest I've been since 1980. *Fear*. I am an easy, rememberable target — the outrageous fat girl on the scooter. Some days I'd like to just go unnoticed through the world. Why does everyone know *my* name? How can *I* be the target of such anger and rage from people I don't even know? *Fear*. More harassing phone calls, more things delivered to my home that I didn't order, more letters from lesbians trashing my actions, beliefs, and values. Angry hating lesbians unleashing their feelings on a convenient scapegoat.

So, how do I write about this factually in a non-defensive manner, with just a touch of indifference? It's not possible for this fat, outrageous, loud-mouthed, working class crip. Instead I will give you what is possible; pieces of my heart, a glimpse of a view from this wheelchair.

Good work was done there. *Many* lesbians heard the issues. *Many* dykes wanted to educate themselves on access issues and ableism. *Many* dykes committed to taking what they learned home to their own communities. *Some* women came to understand the concept of accessible culture. *Some* lesbians became our friends. A few refused to attend a festival that was unsafe for women with mobility related disabilities. Most were sympathetic and understanding to our cause...until we became "too militant" and "unreasonable."

As expected, it was predominantly

we are able to transcend our differences and come together for the difficult struggle ahead.

Sincerely,  
Don Gorton  
The Greater Boston  
Lesbian/Gay  
Political Alliance

## Troubled, and hoping for better accountability

Dear *GCN*:

As a black lesbian and a member of the greater Boston lesbian and gay community, I have always considered *GCN* to be a very responsible newspaper. I support the paper and carry copies with me when I go off to conferences, etc. But I must protest the manner in which *GCN* reporter Laura Briggs presented news of the March 3rd meeting about the referendum (*GCN*, March 11-17, 1990).

To my knowledge, Briggs was not in the room when I made my comments, yet she quoted me verbatim in *GCN* without calling to question me about my remarks. I did not say I would not be on the committee because "I don't buy into it," although I did say I could not serve on the committee. Nor did I say "my group" was not interested in being on it. In fact when I left (early, because I had a previous commitment), I wrote the names BCBLG (Boston Coalition for Black Lesbians and Gays) and AMALGM (Alliance of Mass. Asian Lesbians and Gay Men) on a slip of paper and gave them to a steering committee member, suggesting that the committee call me later for telephone numbers if they were interested in diversifying the committee. They have not called. This doesn't surprise me, because I was told that after the first meeting it was suggested that someone on the steering committee get in touch with me to see if I was interested in serving; I got no call then either. But that is not the issue I am raising in this letter, so let's leave that aside for the moment.

I did not say that I "felt the steering committee's purpose was to tell people what to do and say." What I said in the meeting was that I was troubled by the possibility of the larger lesbian and gay community's being silenced by the steering committee, and that

women of color who became our most outspoken, visible allies. A lawyer, a facilitator, a group of women who came up with some fast solutions and money in an effort to prevent us from being arrested and allowing us to continue our education on the land. I am grateful for the skills I have learned from the civil rights and anti-racism movements. Thankful to hear women of color vocalizing the similarities between those and the disability rights movement.

As a group, the core of six picketers moved and learned together. Four wheelchair users, one able-bodied ally and one non-visibly disabled dyke. We came together to protest this unsafe festival after we all tried to ignore it. Dread... "Oh no, another inaccessible festival, in our own backyard this time." Some of us had planned to leave the state over Labor Day. Too much fear, too much pain, too much sadness at once again being excluded from a lesbian or women's event.

Most of us have been active in working on access issues at other women's music festivals and events. All of us have a herstory of fighting for our rights and those of other oppressed people. We ran the spectrum of lesbian politics — from left of left, to the center of right, and everything in between. "Good Crips" became "Bad Crips" and those with the role of "Bad Crip" moved more in the direction of "Good Crip." Somehow with our love and commitment we kept finding a middle ground. Every move we made, every new or revised decision was arrived at through consensus — presenting one heart, one united front. We became a loving, trusting, protesting unit. *That* was power, *that* was grace, and *that* was what made it all worth it.

We came from Connecticut and Massachusetts and post-festival we are seeing positive changes in those communities as well as others. In my own community of Western Massachusetts (where the festival took place) there appears to be much more of an awareness of disability discrimination,

I would not give up my right to speak, either for myself or as a representative of my constituency. I stated that I was co-chair of the National Coalition for Black Lesbians and Gays, not that the Boston Coalition for Black Lesbians and Gays was represented by me, as the article said.

Nor did I object to the *existence* of the committee, but said that since I had had no voice in electing it, I would not abide by any rules it made in regard to silencing lesbians and gay men who were not part of it. There is simply too much work to be done, too many people to be talked to, too much ignorance to be overcome for us to be spending our time reporting back to a steering committee for approval of every move and every remark — particularly a committee that is not representative of the diversity of the lesbian and gay community. Yes, let the committee do what it needs to, and let the rest of us do what we need to also. We're all free to act. We're all responsible.

Reporters have responsibilities too. If reporters want to report on a meeting, they ought to declare themselves upfront, state that they are there in a reporter role, and let people speak with that knowledge in mind. Furthermore, they need to learn ways to quote people accurately. Otherwise, they can write about what they think happened, without using names, or state that they are working from the memories and words of others in attendance, in which case they have no right to treat those words as if they are verbatim quotes. As a member of the lesbian and gay community, any one of us has the right to attend meetings; when we attend as members of the press, however, different ethical rules of conduct apply. Reporters need to learn what the boundaries are if lesbians and gay men are to feel safe attending meetings where we can argue issues out with respect and come up with sane and sensible solutions. Perhaps a future public meeting needs to take place with members of the gay and lesbian press around responsibility. I'll gladly attend that one.

Sincerely,  
Angela Bowen  
Boston, Mass.

more commitment to creating accessible culture, more organizing, and more accessible events emerging.

We worked hard. We talked to almost every carload of women who entered the land. We had a desire to educate, to share our experience, to show our value to the lesbian community.

In some women's opinion we were effective. In some women's opinion the informational picket was great, the *brief* blocking of the road was not. In some women's opinion we should not have protested at all at the first ever *Lesbian* festival. In some women's opinion we were irrational, angry, trouble-making, disabled dykes.

In my opinion, I did what I have to do every day of my life as a working class dyke on wheels in order to just *exist* and *move* through the world: educate people on disability discrimination and ableism and refuse to be treated as a non-entity by opening my mouth and saying: NO. ENOUGH. DO NOT EXCLUDE ME. LISTEN TO ME. ACKNOWLEDGE MY PRESENCE, VALUE MY BEING, SEE ME AS SEXUAL, DON'T TREAT ME WITH PITY. RESPECT ME. ALLOW YOURSELF TO LOVE ME.

If you would like a many-page description of why we came together to picket the festival, our meeting with the organizers, why we blocked the road, and in general what went down from our point of view, send a self-addressed stamped envelope to: Julie Reiskin, P.O. Box 41, Willimantic, Conn. 06226.

There is an audio tape on file of our meeting with the organizers. For information on that, contact: Bonnie Louison, 70 High St., Stoneham, MA 02180.

For general information regarding access issues, if you need help creating accessible culture, or want to help us create accessible culture, contact: *Women Creating Accessible Community, 16 Center St., Suite 219, Northampton, Mass. 01060.*

## Needing both a "mainstream" and a "grassroots" movement

[*GCN* received a copy of this letter to Bay Windows. — Ed.]

Dear *Bay Windows*:

I would like to offer another account of the community meetings held recently to mobilize against the repeal of the lesbian/gay civil rights bill. To read the *Bay Windows* report ("Who shall lead? Representation questions stall campaign effort", Mar. 7-14, 1990), one would assume that there were two distinct groups present, "the leaders" and "the observers" or "onlookers." One also easily reads that the "onlookers" harrassed "the leaders" (out of sheer pettiness), thereby "stalling" the process. Sounds like the good guys versus the bad guys, an all-too-typical gambit which only serves to alienate us at a time when we have a unique opportunity to draw together.

I hope it is not too naive to think that the goal of a "community meeting" is to open the process; many of us came as *participants*, not "onlookers." We came to discuss how to build a successful effort, to protect the gay/lesbian rights bill, but also to stir the strength and emotion of a diverse community and to find a way for us to work together. That is the opportunity we now have, and its implications reach far beyond this one referendum.

Too often we are faced with a choice between a "professional campaign" waged only by those affiliated with larger, better-endowed, more "mainstream" gay/lesbian political groups and a broader, "grassroots" movement...I think we need both. Seeking broader representation now, on the Steering Committee, can lead to an effort that is powerful and united. Rather than "stalling," we are (finally) searching for much-needed diversity and coalitions within our own community and in our community of allies.

Hopefully, a diverse group will participate in the next community meeting on March 24, and in the meetings to come. And hopefully, all will be treated with respect and openness.

Laurie Livingston  
Jamaica Plain, Mass.

"Community Voices" and "Speaking Out" are parts of our efforts to provide a true forum of opinion for the community. We encourage you to send your ideas, feelings and comments to us, and to respond to ideas expressed in this space. We welcome all contributions except personal attacks. Copies of letters and "Speaking Out" contributions sent elsewhere are printed on a space-available basis. *GCN* reserves the right to edit letters and "Speaking Out" contributions for length and clarity, in consultation with the author. The opinions expressed are those of the author and are not intended to represent the views of the *GCN* membership.

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## Focusing on the larger threats we face

Dear *GCN*:

The threat of a referendum on the Massachusetts lesbian/gay civil rights law has riveted the attention of activists in our community since November 16, 1989, when "Citizens for Family First" filed its initial petition "protesting" against the law. From the beginning, lesbian and gay rights organizations, including Gay and Lesbian Advocates and Defenders (GLAD) and the Greater Boston Lesbian/Gay Political Alliance, have fought the attempt, first, in the Attorney General's office, arguing against certification of the referendum. The Attorney General ruled against the repeal and impounded the blank petition forms needed for signature gathering, only to have the Supreme Judicial Court order them released on January 10, 1990. The Massachusetts Gay and Lesbian Political Caucus and the Alliance next sent out truth squads of volunteers willing to serve on the front lines of our struggle, by asking people in shopping malls, grocery stores, and wherever else petitioners turned up, not to sign. Despite the truth squads' valiant efforts in the face of homophobic hostility, Family First was able to collect 100,000 raw signatures, and approximately 62,000 registered voters to force a referendum.

At this point, despite the pending case in the SJC, activists decided to organize a campaign. A total of 12 hours were spent in organizing meetings on Feb. 24 and March 3, by hardy lesbians and gay men committed to the fight against Family First.

I was troubled that the *Gay Community News* article reporting these important meetings focused much more on transitory disagreements among activists than the crisis which brought us together. At no point in the lengthy article did writer Laura Briggs seek to put the meetings in their wider context — that of a community under hateful attack from a group of virulent, highly organized homophobes, who oppose the new law precisely because they think we deserve discrimination. I question the writer's journalistic priorities when lesbian and gay internal process receives vastly more attention than, say, Family First's tactic of inflaming AIDS hysteria in its literature, or the exigencies of countering a disciplined force with dedicated volunteers in virtually every city and town in the Commonwealth. Given the enormity of the homophobic challenge we face, I find the writer's fascination with my views on *Robert's Rules of Order* particularly curious. (The quote attributed to me is in any event misleading — I did not make a unilateral decision to impose rules of order on the meeting because the Alliance uses Robert's Rules. Rather, the Steering Committee as a body wanted a modicum of procedure as it approached the task of initiating a campaign, and Mike Izdanski of Springfield and I, as acting chairpeople, tried to provide it. No one who sat through the full seven hour marathon on March 3 could even pretend that Robert's Rules were somehow observed.)

Even so, I believe that Ms. Briggs, those quoted in her article, and I share the hope that the community meeting on March 24 will ensure an inclusionary, cooperative campaign around which we can unite. And I fervently hope Family First will be denied the satisfaction of seeing further accounts in the lesbian/gay press (which they read) of discord and division in our fledgling campaign efforts. For — it must be said — the homophobes will win and we will lose unless



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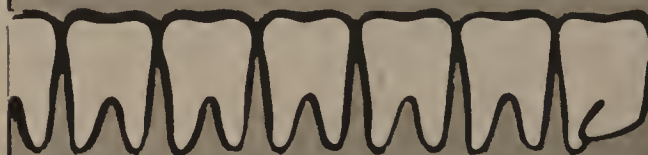
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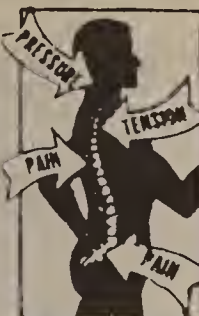
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## Bisexual

Continued from page 1

woman asked the bisexuals in the room, "Why can't you be gay for a day?"

Bisexuals and their supporters responded angrily to those in favor of the name change. One bisexual man said that he wasn't half gay and half straight, but was always bisexual. "I don't call myself 'gay' because 'gay' would be the wrong name," he said. A lesbian told the crowd that her bisexual woman lover "is more than an ally." And in another statement circulated at the meeting, a gay, lesbian and bisexual speaker's bureau, Face to Face, argued that the entire community is "diminished if any one of us remains invisible — whether that [invisibility] is the lack of lesbians and gay men as speakers at last year's March or the decisions this year to remove 'Bisexual' from the title and exclude bisexuals and heterosexual allies from the March Steering Committee."

The evening concluded with a consideration of steps that could be taken in order to heal the wounds left by the debates over the 1989 and 1990 marches. One suggestion was establishing an interim steering committee for next year's march that would include bisexuals. Another was the creation of a steering committee made up of delegates from each of the area's various lesbian, gay and bisexual organizations. A core group of volunteers agreed to plan a structure in order to consider next steps.

As the meeting came to a close, it was clear that many people maintained the positions they had had before the gathering. Several people, however, said that they at least had a clearer idea of what was at stake in the dispute. Although Yeskel was reluctant to assess the impact of the meeting, she thought it was a good first step. "It's the beginning of a dialogue," she said. □

## Skinhead

Continued from page 3

Grimes, 18, is still sought as a fugitive. "I can't understand why officials ever released him," Johnson said after the conviction.

"It's fabulous how Scott brought home the homophobic motivation a second time," said Linda Delaney, Johnson's counsel. "He doesn't miss a beat on that issue." She said the sentence is "substantial enough for deterrence, punishment, and rehabilitation."

The attack on Johnson, one of the worst incidents of anti-gay violence here, occurred in a school parking lot next to P Street Beach along Rock Creek. About eight youths armed with bats looking to "bash some fags" for rent money confronted Johnson after Grimes suggested they go "fuck up some faggots," for cash and credit cards, cooperating female gang members testified. The attack left him bleeding profusely with lung collapse and fractures in his skull, ribs, finger, and shoulder.

## Media ignores hearings

Although some present at McCall's sentencing got the signal that hate crimes do not pay, people who relied on DC's two daily newspapers for information about the case were left out in the cold. A week after Hyder's hearing, neither the *Washington Post* nor the *Washington Times* had run reports.

"There's a denial around the extent of violence against lesbians and gay men in the media generally," said Ettlebrick. "It's outrageous they wouldn't report on this. The media is obligated to send a message about how wrong this kind of violence is."

In early March, the Gay and Lesbian Activists Alliance (GLAA) had won approval from *Washington Post* officials to hold a briefing for reporters and editors on the community's concerns. The *Post* did devote three paragraphs to McCall's sentencing several days late, and activists credited it for a front-page story on gaybashing last September. "We do very well with broad-brush stories," said assistant *Post* news editor Greg Brock, an openly-gay journalist who recently returned to the paper from San Francisco. "But we drop the ball on follow-up stories."

"If silence equals death in the context of AIDS," said Kevin Berrill of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, "it's certainly no less true in the context of anti-gay violence." Berrill added that, "Failure by the media to cover anti-gay violence creates the impression that the problem doesn't exist, or isn't important." □



Allen Ginsberg, Judy Graber

# OUT write 90

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Corn, Robert Glück, Samuel Steward, Joan Nestle,

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Jeffrey Escoffier, Phyllis Klotz

## DOES YOUR MAMA KNOW ABOUT ME? DOES SHE KNOW JUST WHO I AM?

BY ESSEX HEMPHILL

The following text was delivered by Essex Hemphill as part of the opening plenary session at the OUT WRITE '90 conference. It is based on the introduction to *Brother to Brother: New Writings by Black Gay Men*, edited by Hemphill and scheduled for publication later this year.

Does your mama know about me?  
Does she know just what I am?

Throughout the 1980s, many of us grieved the loss of friends, lovers and relatives who were one moment strong, healthy and able-bodied, but then in an instant became thin-framed, hacking and wheezing, their bodies wracked with horrible pain. Sometimes brave souls would return to the family roost to disclose their sexuality and ask permission to die in familiar surroundings. Too often, families were discovering for the first time that the dear brother, the favorite uncle, the secretive son was a homosexual, a black gay man, and the unfortunate victim of the killer virus, AIDS. Some parents had always known and others had never suspected that their son was a black gay man, a sissy, a queer, a faggot. For some families this shock of recognition and grief expressed itself as shame and anger; it compelled them to disown their flesh and blood, denying dying men the love and support that friends often provided as extended family. In other instances families were very understanding and bravely stood by their brethren through his final days.

The late Joseph Beam, in his powerful essay, "Brother to Brother: Words from the Heart," defined *home* as being larger, more complex and encompassing than one's living room. He said, "When I speak of home, I mean not only the familial constellation from which I grew, but the entire Black community: the Black press, the Black church, Black academicians, the Black literati, and the Black left. Where is my reflection? I am most often rendered invisible, perceived as a threat to the family, or I am tolerated if I am silent and inconspicuous. I cannot go home as who I am and that hurts me deeply."

Joe articulated one of the primary contradictions black gay men face when our relationships to our families and communities are closely examined. We cannot afford to be disconnected from these institutions, yet we seem willing to create and accept dysfunctional roles in these spaces, roles of caricature and illusion which allow us to engage in dishonest relationships with our kin and foster an apathetic relationship between us and the communities of home that we need and that are in need of our presence. The contradiction of home is amplified when black gay men's relationships with the white gay community are also examined.

The white gay community of the 1980s was not seriously concerned with the plight of black men except as sexual objects. The black male was given very little representation except most often as a big, black dick. This aspect of white gay consciousness is best revealed by the photographs of the late Robert Mapplethorpe on the subject of black males. Though his images may be technically and aesthetically well-composed, what occurs in his work often enough to be of concern is his ability artistically to perpetuate racial stereotypes constructed around sexuality. In some of his images we are only shown parts of the anatomy — genitals, chests, buttocks — close-up and close-cropped to elicit desire. Mapplethorpe's eye pays special attention to the penis — at the expense of showing us the subject's face, and thus, a whole person. The penis becomes the identity of the black male which is the classic stereotype recreated and presented as art in the context of a gay vision. Mapplethorpe's "Man in a Polyester Suit," for example, presents a black man without a head, wearing a business suit, his trousers unzipped, and his fat, long penis dangling down, a penis that is not erect. It can be assumed that many viewers appreciative of Mapplethorpe's work, and those constructing sexual fantasies from it, probably wondered first how much larger would the penis become during erection, as opposed to wondering *who* is the man in the photo? Or *why* is his head missing? What is insulting and endangering

Continued on page 11

Outlook magazine hosted the first national lesbian and gay writers' conference in San Francisco on the weekend of March 3-4, 1990. Over 1,200 people attended the event that was more than a year in the making. OUT WRITE '90, as the conference was called, was not only a celebration of gay writers — or even a chance to network on a grand scale — but a political action. Noting that the number of lesbian and gay books, newspapers and magazines are increasing at a rapid pace, the OUT WRITE '90 planners also noted in the conference program that "attacks on the basis of sexuality, race and gender are also increasing. After almost a decade, AIDS continues to ravage our community. Conservative leaders like Jesse Helms are leading the attack on the lesbian and gay community's freedom of expression. We are living in a time of crisis and challenge."

Putting together any conference is not without difficulty and a national meeting, which is also a "first" that is targeting writers (most of whom do not have very much money for travel and expenses),

## NOTES OF AN INVISIBLE LESBIAN

BY AYO FEMI FOLAYAN

As the old joke goes, there is good news and bad news. The good news is that OUT WRITE '90 happened at all. It promised to be an exciting first-of-a-kind opportunity to network with more than a thousand other lesbian and gay writers in some 30 panel sessions.

The bad news is that we're not in Kansas anymore, Dorothy, and it is appalling for me to experience both blatant and subtle racism at an event of this magnitude in the gay and lesbian community in 1990. I recognize the difficulty of putting on any conference of this size. I know that many people worked very hard just to make it happen. Yet I cannot accept the same old excuses.

If it weren't so tragic it would almost be laughable: A Black writer from Oakland was contacted because someone on the conference planning committee "heard that she was an articulate Black." Each plenary panel of literary luminaries contained one carefully placed Black individual. A panel entitled "Revis(ion)ing Race: A Conversation About Politics, Literature and Invisibility" really increased the sense of invisibility for Native Americans, Asian Americans, and Latinas who were entirely absent from the panel membership. Participants in a lesbians of color caucus on Sunday afternoon almost universally had been contacted at the last minute to participate in panels which would have otherwise been all white and mostly male.

The brouhaha over censorship and the recent issues generated by Senator Jesse Helms and the National Endowment for the Arts has generated outrage and impassioned responses to this external threat to the creative sensibilities of nearly all gay and lesbian writers. However, I find frightening the tendency to react by calling for the end of all censorship, without carefully defining the term. As I define censorship, I am referring to governmentally-imposed regulations that limit the right of expression of individuals. This concept of censorship does not include my right to confront all oppressors: to silence the racist outpourings of the Aryan Nation or the anti-Jewish rhetoric of the Nazis or the misogynist and violent images of women in the media. When I expressed my point of view during the panel

Continued on page 11



# A FIRST-OF-ITS-KIND POLITICAL ACTION

becomes a nightmare. This is not even beginning to deal with covering topics that will have resonance and importance for both lesbians and gay men, as well as address the needs of the broad racial, health status, and professional diversity of the community. But the OUT WRITE planners — most of whom are involved with *Outlook* — managed to put together a two-day program that included two sessions, 175 panelists on 30 panels followed by audience questions, and more than a dozen associated readings. No one complained that there wasn't enough to do.

OUT WRITE '90's scope was tremendous and it was clear that the organizers attempted to deal with topics that were practical as well as theoretical, provocative as well as uplifting. The conference opened with a welcome by Jeffrey Escoffier, an *Outlook* editor, then keynote addresses by Judy Grahn and Allen Ginsberg. This was followed by a plenary on "AIDS and the Responsibility of the Writer" with Essex Hemphill, Pat Califia, Susan Griffin, John Preston and Sarah Schulman, moderated by

Roberto Bedoya. Many of the first-day panels dealt with the hard core practicals of publishing: "Queer Alternatives: Alternative Publishing," "Contracts and the Role of Agents," "Doing It For Ourselves: Lesbian and Gay Magazines," "Getting Lesbian and Gay Books Reviewed," "Bookstores: Different Knots Tying it All Together," and "Scholarship and Community: Constructing Gay and Lesbian Studies."

These ideas were also explored on the second day with a plenary called "Lesbian and Gay Literature in the Marketplace" and panels such as "Who's Designing Whose Words: Graphic Artists and Writers," "Getting Into Print: Finding Our Writers/Finding Our Readers," and "Writing Groups and Classes."

Many of the other panels examined the specifics of writing itself: "Uncovering Our Histories: Recalling Our Lives," "Science Fiction: Expanding the Boundaries," "Poetry and Writing," "Novels, Characters and Audience," "Gay Mysteries: Who Dun It and Who's Doing

It?," "Writing Short Fiction," "Acting Out: Performance and Writing," "Standing Room Only: Lesbian and Gay Playwrights," "Writing Against the Tide: Chronic Illness, Disability and Writing," and "Poetry and Tradition."

While these were more "hands-on" sessions, there were others on more explicitly political and philosophical matters. Questions of racism and inclusion were addressed in "Revis(ion)ing Race: A Conversation About Politics, Literature and Invisibility," "Lenguas en Llamas: Latino/a Voices," as well as by people of color on almost all of the other panels. Concerns about censorship — both external and internal — were brought up in "Self Censorship and Personal Revelation," "Policing Our Desire: Censorship and Lesbian and Gay Writing," "Coming Attractions: The Future of Sexually Explicit Writing" and "Sex Writing and the New Narrative." These panels brought the conference out of the mind and into the real world. "Cultural Workers: The Roles of Gay Journalism," and "Writers as Activists" made it clear that gay and lesbian

writers, readers, publishers, critics, editors, and artists do not — and cannot — exist in any sort of cultural vacuum.

If the connection between lesbian and gay writing and politics was directly addressed in the last two panels, it was certainly the undercurrent for almost everything else said and done over the two days. The ability to speak and write the truths about gay and lesbian lives was too hard for anyone at the conference to think that it came easily — a fact reinforced by the panel "Lesbian and Gay Writing Before Stonewall" and the honoring of such gay and lesbian pioneering writers as Ann Bannon, Samuel R. Delany, Allen Ginsberg, Judy Grahn, Ann Allen Shockly, and Samuel S. Steward. During her presentation on the first plenary session, Sarah Schulman said that if there are any gay writers who are not activists, they're along for a free ride. And while many in the audience had diverse notions of what activism and writing were, there was clear agreement throughout the weekend that gay and lesbian writing was not — and could not — be separated from the world of politics.

— Michael Bronski

Ston, Sally Gearhart  
Shby, Ruthanne Robson  
Pat Califia, Thom Gunn, Marilyn Hacker, Jewell  
Gomez, John Preston, Don  
Frederique Delacoste, Joh

## THE ONLY LESBIAN IN THE WORLD

BY MICHAEL BRONSKI

I have a friend who is fond of telling a story about growing up and knowing that she was a lesbian. She actually *knew* before she even really knew what a lesbian was, but by the age of 14 she was pretty clear on the second as well as the first point. She went through a brief period of depression because she thought that she was the only lesbian in the world. But she soon reconciled herself to this fact and decided that when she was old enough she would move to Greenwich Village. This was the mid-'50s and the Village was the beacon across the Hudson that beckoned queers of all genders, sexual preferences, and political persuasions promising, if not safety, at least anonymity. My friend would live in a tiny garret and write brilliant novels. But as she grew older and more aware — and as society also changed — she realized that there was a whole world out there filled with women (and men) just like her.

She took to the second wave of feminism like Radclyffe Hall took to Una Trowbridge, and when lesbian and gay liberation broke big in '69, she jumped right in. She had a vision of a feminist, lesbian and gay culture she had never imagined before. She worked on movement newspapers, wrote essays, attended meetings, and meetings, and meetings, worked on her novel, got involved in long-winded political debates, literary factions, movement factions, personal squabbles, political wars, and literary battles. One day she woke up and decided that all she *really* wanted was to be the only lesbian in the world, move to Greenwich Village, live in a tiny garret and write brilliant novels.

My friend always finishes the story with a self-indulgent chuckle and explains that she is just a bit meeting-out and low energy from dealing with editors, writers, deadlines and intellectual over-stimulation. And anyway, her dream garret went condo for \$825,000.

I thought a lot about my friend's story while at the OUT WRITE '90 Conference. I've been going to gay liberation meetings, conferences and workshops for over 20 years now and have been writing for the gay press for 18 and it's easy to get a bit jaded, if not cynical. I'm not sure what I expected from OUT WRITE '90, and even while I was there I wasn't sure of what I was looking for. On the one hand it had all the perks of a successful conference: good conversation, better cruising, a chance to run into old

friends and the possibility to make some business connections. On the other hand, some of the conversations were boring, no one really put out, some of the friends you really wanted to see didn't show up (for a variety of reasons including death) and business connections feel more real when the check is in the mail, if not the mailbox.

But thinking about it two weeks later there are some things that stick in my mind that, while not deeply profound, did make OUT WRITE '90 quite different from other gay literary, writing industry, and political events I have attended. Of course, I still didn't get laid there, but at this point in my life I think I'm happy to settle for slow movements forward and not count on the revolution.

I think what I appreciated most at OUT WRITE '90 was the omnipresent sense of history. Although it has been 20 years since the Stonewall riots (not a long time by the standard charting of history) so much of lesbian and gay culture seems to be of the moment and so much seems to get lost. This is partly because we are still perfecting the ways and means to preserve our past — libraries, archives, histories — as well as the fact that people are *always* coming out and moving gay life along at a much faster clip than straight reality. But I am always amazed when speaking to younger people (either in actual age, or in gay years) to discover that they have never heard of *Boys in the Band*, or James Baldwin's *Another Country*, or Radclyffe Hall's *The Well of Loneliness* — all milestones of my gay education. Sometimes it feels depressing to realize that some people think gay lit started with David Levitt or that Chastity Bono is the first lesbian to be pushed out of the closet, because a strong sense of history is vital for the continuance of gay liberation. Without history we have no idea of where we have been and no sense or real understanding of other lesbian and gay lives.

In a movement that sometimes seems eternally — and many times infernally — youthful, one of the strengths of OUT WRITE '90 was the presence of older lesbians and gay men. Not only "names" like Allen Ginsberg, Del Martin, Phyllis Lyon, Sally Gearhart, or Sammy Steward (although it was wonderful to see their writing and lives honored), but also people, like myself, in their fourth decade whose political, sexual, and emotional experience

Continued on page 11

## FLOATING IN A RIVER OF WRITERS

BY WICKIE STAMPS

The OUT WRITE '90 conference was a river of artists who gently fed me into my future as a writer. Weeks prior I waded into these currents as I cast about for housing. My path quickly collided with a sister writer who offered me her couch and her companionship. I accepted both. She would be a fabulously eccentric hostess who, during my stay, would faithfully feed me three things: brownies at 7 a.m., a fiery spirit and, late one night, her unpublished poems. My daily rhythms would rapidly merge with a third roomie in San Francisco — a Canadian SM writer/graphic artist with whom I'd swap writings and sexual ruminations.

The OUT WRITE '90 conference was a river of artists who gently fed me into my future as a writer. Weeks prior I waded into these currents as I cast about for housing. My path quickly collided with a sister writer who offered me her couch and her companionship. I accepted both. She would be a fabulously eccentric hostess who, during my stay, would faithfully feed me three things: brownies at 7 a.m., a fiery spirit and, late one night, her unpublished poems. My daily rhythms would rapidly merge with a third roomie in San Francisco — a Canadian SM writer/graphic artist with whom I'd swap writings and sexual ruminations.

On the eve of the conference proper my life swept into more artists' lives. I was taken hostage by a butch photographer who, with me in tow, foraged through green groceries seeking delicacies for her home-bound writer/lover who was teetering on the precipice of a final manuscript. I'd spend the evening with this changeling couple: the dazed writer warring deadlines and the flu in her writing room and, in the kitchen, her lover patiently cooking dinner while waiting for her partner to retrieve the sanity and social skills that were trapped inside her writings. Despite being soaked in exhaustion, this pair — after stuffing me with a sumptuous meal — cleared their stressful lives and not only listened to this novice writer's woes but beckoned me into more writers' outlets. Less than one day hence I would return this mentorship when my life splashed into an old comrade — a lesbian communist journalist who, after 15 years of writing and activism was, like me, witnessing the desolation of the U.S. communist movement. I gave, as best I could, the fresh solace that had just been passed to me.

Continued on page 11



Music

Continued from back page  
cessful.

Sally Rogers — Generations (Flying Fish)

Sally Rogers is a folksinger with a decade-long career to her credit. She plays dulcimer and guitar, and for this recording has assembled a fine group of players including the members of Trapezoid. She also has a lovely, crystal-clear voice, without the wimpy paleness that can sometimes imply. On the back of the jacket Rogers writes, "In gathering these songs for my fourth solo album, I realized that all of them had some connection to women. Some are about women, others are written by women...While these are mostly not overtly political or feminist in nature, they all speak to the strength of womanhood, its struggles and its delights. And sometimes a whisper is louder than a shout."

Well, maybe sometimes. But on this album, the songs that make you pay attention are the ones that speak out clearly, while the ones that whisper indistinctly slide by without engaging.

"Dead Girl of Hiroshima" calls up the ghost of a child who died there, to make a compelling plea for the end of war. "Testimony of Patience Kershaw" contrasts the reality of the life of a 19th-century woman mine worker with the assumptions of a gentleman about what ladies do. (I would have liked a program note about this song. Is the text taken from an authentic source? Who was Patience talking to?) The powerful "Ballad of Sojourner Truth" places Truth's famous speech at the Seneca Falls Women's Rights Convention in a chant-like *a cappella* setting that transfixes the listener. In a gentler vein, Tom Paxton's "Mother" tells of how an adopted girl learns as a woman to have compassion for her own mother when she becomes a mother herself.

Elsewhere the album is beautiful, but unremarkable by the standards of listeners seeking the struggles and delights of women's lives. If you want to be impressed by clear and compelling speech about women, go back to Faith Nolan; if you want engaging and authentic women's culture, go back to Libana. If you collect good singers, Rogers will interest you. The level of musical quality is uniformly high, and Rogers' singing voice is beautiful. To call the album "partial success" reflects the expectations raised by the liner notes, which to my mind are not fully met.

Peggy Seeger — Familiar Faces (Redwood)

Peggy Seeger has been an honored name in folk music for many years. Her song "Gonna Be An Engineer" was made a classic in U.S. feminist circles by Willie Tyson. In recent years she has turned her talents on guitar, banjo, autoharp, and concertina to songs about women's lives, and for that we are very fortunate. In music and words that are deceptively simple, *Familiar Faces* evokes the lives of women who won't accept injustice. On the liner notes she says she picks up women at bus stops in bad weather, and receives renewed inspiration to talk to women about their lives and to write songs. That grounding in absolute reality gives this recording a tangible authenticity beyond even what dramatic skill alone could provide.

Every song on this album is satisfying.

The best include: "I Support the Boycott," in which a busy housewife smells out products from South Africa at her local grocery, and when offered South African sherry by the Prime Minister herself, says, "Stuff it up your cabinet and tell them this for me: No! I support the boycott...." "R.S.I." (repeated strain injury), in which clerical workers, forced to type all day, tell the boss off at last. "Stitch In Time," a slightly macabre revenge fantasy about a woman whose husband always comes home drunk, beats her up, and passes out (I won't give it away but it's terribly clever). "Woman on Wheels" speaks with the voice of Seeger's friend Jennifer Jones about the ableism of the world and the obstacles it puts in the path of women in wheelchairs:

I went down to Greenham, I was cutting the fence  
Cops pulled me out of the way, then they waded in  
Said "You'll never get arrested, a little lady like you"  
I says "Who are you talking to? I'm a woman on wheels" I said  
Hold on! I got my right to demonstrate  
Roll on — Next time I went down I took a dozen bolt cutters and a dozen wheelchair mates.

"Missing" is an achingly sad song about mothers of "disappeared" children in Latin America, which also resonates with today's headlines as children continue to be abducted:

I had a little sparrow, my little bird, Murielita  
I held her in my womb, my heart sang to her  
I opened my hand, she flew into the daylight singing  
Now my little bird is gone...  
We seek you by day, by night we call your name  
Everywhere we hold your picture high, that someone may see  
And tell us who took you, but their answer is the same...  
The jailers say she never flew, she never sang, never was she born...

"B-Side" is a delicious table-turner that highlights the double-standard women live with. After setting up a world in which men are brought up to fear assault by women, Seeger develops her theme by turning on its head every eliche related to the topic:

It could be a friend who threatens your your body and life  
It could be a teacher, your lover, your mother, your sister, your wife...  
...if you're attacked and abused and you take the women to court  
The coppers are women, the lawyers are women who say you were asking for it...  
But look around: the lovely women about Outnumber the dangerous menacing ones, there's never a doubt  
Do they raise their voices and try to find a cause or a cure?  
No, they only say, "I'm not one of the dangerous ones for sure."

This is a thoroughly convincing song, one that undoubtedly could have impact on any man willing to really listen to it.

Seeger is a master of the art of folksong. She focuses her lens on the lives of women with uncommon clarity and attention to detail. *Familiar Faces* is an album of great skill, wit, and integrity. Because it was released in the U.S. in 1990, it starts the new year off at a very high standard indeed. □

Caroline Foty worries a lot less about women's music since these recordings started coming in the mail.

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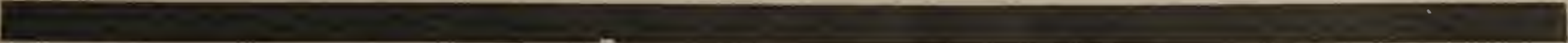
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# Hemphill

Continued from page 8

to black men on one level is Mapplethorpe's *conscious* determination that the faces, the heads, and by extension, the minds and experiences of some of his black subjects were not as important as close-up shots of their penises. It is virtually impossible to view Mapplethorpe's photos of black males and avoid confronting issues of exploitation and objectification. Additionally, black gay men are not immune to the desire elicited by his photos. In "True Confessions: A Discourse on Images of Black Male Sexuality," Isaac Julien and Kobena Mercer accurately identify this dichotomy when they observe that Mapplethorpe's images of black males reiterate the "terms of colonial fantasy" and "service the expectations of white desire: but what do these images say to our wants and desires as black gay men?" they ask.

When black gay men approached the gay community to participate in the struggle for acceptance and to forge bonds of brotherhood, bonds so loftily proclaimed to be *the vision* of the best gay minds of my generation, we discovered that the beautiful rhetoric was empty. The disparity between words and action was as wide as the Atlantic Ocean and deeper than Dante's hell. There was no "gay" community for black men to come home to in the 1980s. What was there was as mythical and distant from the realities of black men as was Oz in its relationship to Kansas. At the baths, certain bars, in bookstores and cruising zones, black men were welcome; these constructions of pleasure allowed the races to mutually explore sexual fantasies and, after all, the black man engaging in such a construction only needed to whip out a penis of almost any size to obtain the rapt attention withheld from him in other social/political structures of the gay community. These sites of pleasure were more tolerable of the presence of black men because they enhanced the sexual ambiance, but that same tolerance did not always apply once the sun began to rise. Open fraternizing at a level suggesting companionship or love between the races was not tolerated in the light of day by many black or white gay men. Terms such as "dinge queen" — which refers to white men who prefer black men — and "snow queen" — which refers to black men who prefer white men — were created by a gay community that could obviously not be trusted to believe its own rhetoric concerning brotherhood, fellowship and dignity. Only an entire community's silence, complicity and racial apathy are capable of reinforcing these conditions.

Some of the best minds of my generation would have us believe AIDS has brought the gay community closer together and infused it with a more democratic mandate. That is only a partial truth which further underscores the fact that the gay community still operates from a one-eyed, one-color perception of *community* that is most likely to recognize blonde before black, but seldom the two together.

Some of the best gay minds of my generation believe AIDS has made the gay community a more responsible construction, but what AIDS really manages to do is clearly point out how significant are the cultural and economic differences between us, differences so extreme that black men suffer a disproportionate number of AIDS deaths in communities with very sophisticated gay health care services.

Some of the best gay minds of my generation believe that we speak as one voice and dream one dream, but we are not monolithic. We are not even respectful of each other's differences. We are a long way from that, Dorothy. I tell you Kansas is closer.

We are communities engaged in a fragile co-existence if we are anything at all. Our most significant coalitions have been created in the realm of sex. What is most clear for black gay men is this: we have to do for ourselves *now*, and for each other *now*, what no one has ever done for us — we have to be there for one another and trust less in the adhesions of semen and kisses to bind us. The only sure guarantee we have of survival is that which we construct from our own self-determination.

Look around, brothers. There is rampant killing occurring in *our* communities, drug addiction and drug trafficking overwhelm us, the blood of young black males runs curbside in a steady flow, the bodies of black infants crave crack, not a warmth called "mother's love." The nation's prisons are reservations and shelters for black men. An entire generation of black

youths is self-destructing before our eyes. We cannot witness this in silence and apathy and claim our hands are bloodless. We are a wandering tribe that needs to go home before home is gone. We need not continue standing in line to be admitted into spaces that don't want us there. We cannot continue to exist without clinics and businesses, human services and cultural institutions that we create to support, sustain and affirm us.

Our mothers and fathers are waiting for us. Our sisters and brothers are waiting. Our communities are waiting for us to come home. They need our love, our talents and skills, and we need theirs. They may not understand everything about us, but they will remain ignorant, misinformed and lonely for us, and we for them, for as long as we stay away hiding in communities that have never really welcomed us or the gifts we bring.

I ask you brother: Does your mama *really* know about you? Does she *really* know what I am? Does she know I want to love her son and care for him, nurture and celebrate him? Do you think she'll understand? I hope so, because *I am* coming home. There is no place else to go that will be worth so much effort and love. □

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## NOTES

The epigram is taken from the song "Does Your Mama Know About Me?" recorded by Bobby Taylor and the Vancouvers, Motown/Gordy 1968.

Joseph Beam, "Brother to Brother: Words from the Heart," *In the Life*, Alyson Publications, Inc., Boston, 1986.

Isaac Julien and Kobena Mercer, "True Confessions: A Discourse on Images of Black Male Sexuality," (London: *Ten-8*, No. 22, 1986).

## Folayan

Continued from page 8

discussion, "Policing Our Desire: Censorship and Lesbian and Gay Writing," particularly expressing my concerns that this kind of confrontation of oppression was important to maintain, I experienced a verbal attack by a white woman in the audience. I made the link between portrayals of women on record covers being stabbed or in chains and the brutal murders of more than 20 Black women in South Central Los Angeles in the past several years. She responded by saying, "What are you (complaining about)? You're not dead yet!"

While this attitude was mostly dismissed as the ravings of one particular conference participant, I can remember a time in the past when other conscious white people would have reminded this woman that it is not necessary to wait until someone present has died to take anti-oppressive action. No one in the room responded directly to this woman's comments. Even if she was operating out of ignorance, it is inconceivable to me that the focus became silencing me as the lone dissident voice in the room rather than allowing a dialogue to happen which fully explored all the ramifications of censorship and developing effective pro-active strategies to respond to the immediate issues.

Another instance of what to me is misguided apprehension occurred during the presentation by Essex Hemphill during the plenary exploration of "AIDS and The Responsibility of the Writer." In his impassioned and poignant speech, Hemphill identified the perpetuation of racist stereotypes in Robert Mapplethorpe's work, citing the photographs which depict and glorify the penises of Black men in the abstract while eliminating their heads from the portrayal. White conference participants expressed concern that Hemphill might "go too far" in his analysis rather than appreciating the risk he was taking to interrupt the racism or welcoming the opportunity to examine their participation in the conventional racist mythology of Black men as sexual beings.

Instead of merely complaining about what happened, though, let me put out some concrete suggestions:

How To Plan A Conference in the Gay and Lesbian Community

1. Start the planning process with a coalition of lesbians and gay men from the entire wealth of diversity we encompass: lesbians

and gay men of color, lesbians and gay men with disabilities, old lesbians and gay men, Jewish lesbians and gay men, etc.

2. Include representatives from all those groups in every step of the event: keynote speakers, plenaries, panels (not just on topics related to their particular issues), entertainment, and conference materials.

3. Include anti-racism and anti-ableism (as a minimum) work as part of the conference planning agenda.

4. Do fundraising to increase access for poor and working class people to conference events.

This list will suffice to appropriately change the very process of organizing to empower excluded members of the gay and lesbian community to assume their rightful leadership. Let there be no more conferences with the same list of complaints lamented by participants hurt once again by the pain of oppression from within the community by those they perceived as brothers and sisters. Let us stretch to acknowledge this lesson and make the commitment to graduate to a new inclusive and healing process. □

## Bronski

Continued from page 9

are many times radically different from someone who came out 15 years after Stonewall. I found it moving not only when Allen Ginsberg and Judy Grahn opened the conference with their keynote addresses but also when Naiad publisher Barbara Grier spoke of researching the women who wrote the famous lesbian pulps of the '50s and paid tribute to such gay male writers of the period as Donald Windham, John Horne Burns and Calder Willingham and explained how important they were to her. All too often we dwell upon our differences rather than our shared experiences, ignoring the fact that throughout even our recent history, differences and similarities are always in flux, changing and shaping themselves to fit circumstance and individual need. There are times when I have realized I have more common shared experience with a lesbian who came out as I did before Stonewall than with a gay man who came out a year ago. For gay writing to have a future it must have a secure sense of history and OUT WRITE '90, more than any other event I can remember, attempted to address this.

A week after I returned from OUT WRITE '90 a friend asked me if there were many "stars" there. I paused for a second, not knowing exactly what she was speaking about, and then realized that the "star system" — so often the bane of movement and literary events — seemed almost completely absent at OUT WRITE '90. There were, of course, writers there who have what are commonly referred to as "names"; people whose work is well known and who have the luck, and in most cases the talent, to have published successfully. What amazed me was not the amount of respect accorded them, but the lack of adulation. Fawning over the famous was clearly not in favor at the conference.

But more than this there seemed to be very little competition among writers. Publishing can be a very competitive field, and the world of gay publishing — books, magazines, newspapers, journals — is often perceived as a small one, with limited opportunities and few openings for new, or even published, writers. The tensions that I have felt over the years within myself and from other writers about getting published were almost completely missing from OUT WRITE '90. There are good reasons why jealousy and rivalry exist in the varied spheres of the gay writing world: there are few opportunities to actually make a living at writing, many newspapers and magazines pay poorly, if at all, and financial worries place everyone — from publishers to typesetters, writers to editors — under a strain. No one is immune from these pressures which many times make easy discussions difficult and difficult discussions near impossible. It's no wonder that my friend wanted, at points, to be the only lesbian in the world and not have to worry or deal with the stresses of a community.

I don't think that OUT WRITE '90 solved many of these problems (and there were many which it did not even directly address) but it did create a place in which they seemed manageable, less divisive, less

destructive. I don't think anyone at OUT WRITE '90 would argue that gay and lesbian writing could exist independently from the lesbian and gay communities and its attendant complex world of politics. Nor would anyone be naive enough to think that any three people might agree on what those communities, or those politics, were. The truth is that, many times, our politics and our writings come out of these discussions and struggles, that they are a necessary part of our growth and our survival. What OUT WRITE '90 provided, at least for me, was a new perspective and an alternative view of so many of these tensions and turmoils that make lesbian and gay writing and publishing not only vexing but vital. □

## Stamps

Continued from page 9

Inside the halls of OUT WRITE, during lulls in conversations on the long lunch lines, I'd gingerly tap on shoulders or extend my hand to recognized authors whose words had stayed my suicide. Would they, in the flesh, be as open as their works? Invariably, their hands and their humor were there to heave me into their lives. Sometimes I was gifted with a bear hug and raunchy slap on my chap-covered ass. At other moments, I succumbed to gentler, softer squeezes. Each word and gesture urged me onward into this writers' world.

Constantly gay and lesbian sexuality washed over me. In hallways or OUT WRITE-sponsored gatherings, few interactions were spared innuendos or ulterior motives. Depending on your proclivity, you might wheedle your way deeper into the leather women's clan or collide with an East Coast crony, cruise the crowd and assess the trade. (Or, if they wandered into your scope, take aim and trash some reviled contemporary whose works had spit upon your spirit.) Each act, as poignant as the erotic prose and poems being read from OUT WRITE podiums or events throughout the city, cemented our shared status not just as writers, but as gay men and lesbians.

But fear slammed into my serenity when an anti-porn skirmish erupted during the censorship panel's question-and-answer period. With lightening speed, women's words lashed open old abscesses and a purulent atmosphere spilled onto the conference floor. Clan alliances were as muddled as the audience's respective diatribes and seemed like lines from some hackneyed absurdist play. Little, save rage, surfaced with any clarity. A big belled, butch West Coast SM dyke stood up and took her ground. She was alone in her clarity as she placed a jetty against the veiled but rising tide of anti-porn spittle.

The forgotten and the fallen were tossed into OUT WRITE's massive stream of writers. During presentations, chatty audiences were stilled and often wept when writers, choked with grief, recognized the voices lost to AIDS. Pat Califia reminded us of the invisible when, during the "AIDS and the Responsibility of Writers" panel, she shattered the silence surrounding lesbian IV drug users. Later Native poet Chrystos, a burning ember of rage, would bear witness the uninvited when she'd query "Where are the Native peoples, people of color, and women booksellers?" Amber Hollibaugh, a self-identified fem and former sex worker, on the final day and in the final panel, dredged up more disenfranchise when she challenged all present to scrape the shame from our butch/fem lesbian ancestors and heap the truth onto this proud and pivotal legacy. All three women held not only writers but our respective communities accountable for this negligence.

Prior to my journey to OUT WRITE I swore, to myself and to my friends, that I would take a desperately needed break from writing. So, I took no notes — save one. At the end of a deeply impassioned presentation that received a standing ovation, Amber Hollibaugh said one thing that I wrote onto my program which, upon returning, I taped onto the wall I face when I write. "Writing is going home," she said. So was the conference. □





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Collective lesbian household seeks LF over 25 to share irreverence fashion intervention and apple pancakes. Feminists vegetarians activists. Spacious home near green and orange Ts, pond and great ice cream. Rent a mere 241.67-plus. All this and more. Call Today: 524-0821. (36)

LF 42 seeks LF 30-plus for beautiful J.P. apt. Trees, porches, warm, friendly, politl, spiritual, fun, non-smok, cats, near Arboretum, T. \$316-plus, March or later. Tusi, 524-1812. (36)

LF non-smoker renting single furnished bedroom, parlor, shared kitchen, bath, laundry. \$325 includes all. Pets in home. No drugs. Security. (508) 997-3135. New Bedford. (36)

#### GREAT COOP HOUSE SEEKS 3 FIM,

any age, race, affectional preference. Move in date flexible but prefer by 6/1. 8 bedroom beautiful spacious house and garden. Now 4F/4M ages 31-57. Share chores, vegetarian meals, house meetings. Nonsmoking. For 10 years we've lived safely and harmoniously in Uphams Corner, Dorchester. Near T. \$250 plus \$50 utils. 265-7479. (37)

Jamaica Plain GM 24 sks GM/F for 3 BR sunny harmonious household, 260 plus utilities, 2 min to T. Share chores, interests. Creatively, aesthetically, domestically, inclined. Cats too. Non-smokers, no drugs. Marcus 666-1684. (36)

#### SMOKE-FREE LF FOR CAMB/BELMONT

Cozy 2 BR apt nice neighborhood. Near T, parking. Laundry in building. Rent \$300 incl heat, hw. No pets, sorry. Call 864-4314. Leave message. (37)

GM and LF seek roommate (30-plus) to share Belmont house. Fireplace, yard, parking, near T. No pets, smoking, drugs. \$400/mo. Available immediately. 484-0031. (36)

2 LF's and 1 BiF seek another for sunny, spacious Porter Sq. home. No smokers, min. drugs or alcohol. We have 1 cat. \$350-plus. 491-4005. (36)

21. 1 GM seeking 4th for inexpensive, spacious, sunny Watertown Apartment. Stable, independent, have 1 cat, this may be enough. Cigs, light booze, no drugs. Near buses, \$200.00-plus. 1st and 1 1/2 security. Starting April 1st. 926-8258. 426-0037. (36)

#### TEELE SQUARE SOMERVILLE

2 Lesbians and cats seek 1 female roommate for 6 room apt. 10 min walk to Davis "T" stop. No cigs. Avail 5/1. 628-7517. (36)

Newton, Upper Falls. LF looking to share two bedroom apt. Large bedroom available. Cat OK. \$350.00 heat and utilities included. Call 969-7939. (36)

Independent, friendly, political household in Cambridge seeks 4th woman 25-plus. Semi-veg. No pets, drugs, smoke. Avail. April 1st. Cleap rent. 497-7828. (36)

3 LF seek 4th Belmont 4BR, spacious hardwood floors, fireplace, off-street parking, bus-line. 25-plus friendly independent, no smoke, no drugs. \$280-plus. Sara or Sandy 484-8527. (36)

Lesbian Roommate wanted for friendly, tidy, small, cute, inexpensive (275 inc ht & hw) household in Som. nr. Camb. Flexible, comfortable envr. with one other lesbian and cat. Great for modest income artist, activist, student, or young person. 628-0614. (36)

#### TELL THEM YOU SAW IT IN GCN!

## HOUSING WANTED

#### NY SUBLET

I'm looking for a summer sublet or housesit in Manhattan or Brooklyn. Would prefer studio apt or other solo situation but very flexible. Call Elizabeth (617) 524-1390. (37)

#### INMAN SQ/CAMBRIDGE

LF plus two cats seek warm, independent 28-plus GM or LF. Spacious 6 room, sunny apt with fireplace and porch; near T. \$400-plus. Short term or part time welcome. No smoking, drugs, or more pets please. 868-1553. (37)

## A PARTMENTS

Shrewsbury, near Mass. Medical. Newly-renovated in-law apt. Three rooms. New stove, refrig. Mature, quiet person. No drugs, pets. \$425 plus, first, last, sec. dep. 754-4240. 5-9pm. (36)

Apt for Rent...Northshore...Prof 1 couple or single...In-Law Apt on 1 1/2 A, one Bldm, Livingroom Dining Area, Kitchen...Includes all utilities and cable...\$750.00/MO. Call 777-4770. (37)

#### SHORT TERM/PART TIME

Need a flexible situation? GF 37 offers apt to mature, quiet Gl M. Harvard medical area. Close to trans. Please call 442-4693 or leave message. (41)

Sunny 5 room 2 bedroom in well-maintained 3 family house. Oak floors, white walls, eat-in kitchen. Excellent condition. \$800 includes heat and hot water. No fee \$800 per month. 628-5957 (Somerville) (36)

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#### PROVINCETOWN CONDO

Condo, w-end, parking, 1-BR furnished, kitch, bath, CATV, two queen beds. May 15 to Sept 15, \$6,900 or July to Aug., \$6,000. Call Don, (617) 426-8290. (36)

## VACATIONS

#### A GAY COUNTRY INN

Come ski our miles of cross country trails then unwind in our hot tub or in front of a crackling fire. With 19 charming rooms, 100 scenic acres, yummy breakfasts and inexpensive, uncrowded downhill skiing nearby, we're your perfect vacation choice! Great mid-week discounts. THE HIGHLANDS INN, Box 118G, Bethlehem, NH 03574, (603) 869-3978. Grace and Judi, Innkeepers. (42)

A place to stay in historic Santa Fe charming adobe guesthouse hideaway equipped cozy fireplace. Week-end, weekly, monthly rates. (505) 982-6815. (39)

## PUBLICATIONS

North Bi Northwest, an exciting feminist newsletter offering insightful analysis of bisexual issues. \$10/year. North Bi Northwest, PO Box 30645, Greenwood Station, Seattle, WA 98103-0645. (206) 783-7987. (38)

#### SOLO SEX: ADVANCED TECHNIQUES FOR MEN

Learn to have Multiple Orgasms, Psychic Orgasms (without physical stimulation), Maximum Intensity and Potency, Altered Sexual States. Physical, mental health through ecstatic self-pleasuring. No book like it — ever, by recognized authority. Detailed instructions, illustrations, 208 pages. \$16.95 to TECHNIQUES, 3932-C Airport Blvd., Suite 123-GCN, Mobile, AL 36608. (38)

#### BREAKTHROUGH!

Political journal of Prairie Fire Organizing Committee, Spring 1989 issue. Women of the Philippine Revolution — Interview with Makibaka; The Post-Feminist Mystique; speech by PISD (People with Immune System Disorders); Crack and Black Youth. \$3 including postage. John Brown Book Club, POB 1422, San Francisco, CA 94114.

Do you need facts about menopause? Does the stereotyping of older women make you angry? Do you want to be part of an Older Feminists Network? Broomstick, a bimonthly national magazine by, for and about women over forty. Annual subs (US funds only) U.S. \$15, Canada \$20, Overseas and Institutions \$25. Sliding scale available. Sample copy \$3.50. 3543 18 St. #3, San Francisco, CA 94110.

#### BAD ATTITUDE

A lesbian sex magazine. Irreverent and Hot! \$12 for one year's subscription (3 issues). B.A. Inc., P.O. Box 110, Cambridge, MA 02139. (16.33)

#### LESBIAN CONTRADICTION

A Journal of Irreverent Feminism. Quarterly of commentary, analysis, reviews, cartoons & humor by and for women who agree to disagree—who are still political, but not necessarily correct. Sample \$1.50; sub. \$6; more if/less if. LesCon, 584 Castro, No. 236G, SF, CA 94114. (18.35)

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## GAYELLOW PAGES

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#### OFF OUR BACKS

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WOMEN OF POWER: "A Magazine of Feminism, Spirituality, and Politics," an inspiring international quarterly publication. Subscriptions \$22 for 4 issues; single issues \$6 plus \$1 postage. P.O. Box 827, Cambridge, MA 02238, telephone (617) 625-7885. (ex)

#### ON OUR BACKS

The sexual entertainment magazine for lesbians, is 49 pages of erotic fiction, features, plus timely sexual advice and news columns. We are quarterly, national, unique and provocative. \$28 year sub \$6 single issue. ON OUR BACKS, 526 Castro, San Francisco, CA 94114 (ex)

#### WOMEN'S REVIEW OF BOOKS

monthly review of current feminist writing. Since 1983. Our readers span the U.S., Canada, and abroad. Subscriptions \$15 U.S. \$18 Canada, \$25 institutions. Free sample on request. THE WOMEN'S REVIEW, Wellesley Women's Research Center, Wellesley, MA 02181 (ex)

#### BLACK/OUT

Special 10th Anniv. edition of *Black/Out* now available. This bi/annual magazine from the National Coalition for Black Lesbians and Gays contains essays, reviews, poetry, news and announcements concerning the Black Lesbian and Gay community. Sample copy \$6 plus \$1 postage. 1 year subscription (2 issues) \$10 to BLACK/OUT, c/o NCBLG, 19641 West Seven Mile, Detroit, MI 48219. (ex)

## ORGANIZATIONS

#### OLDER LESBIAN ENERGY

Social and support group for women over 40. P.O. Box 1214, East Arlington, MA 02174. (15.48)

#### BLACK AND WHITE MEN TOGETHER

Multiracial group for all people. Call (415) 431-1976 or write BWMT, suite 140, 584 Castro St. SF, CA, 94114. (16.1)

#### BOSTON ALLIANCE OF GAY AND LESBIAN YOUTH

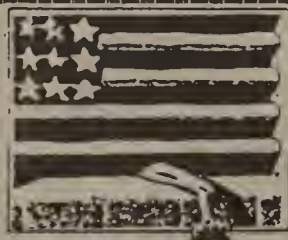
Social support group for youth 22 and under. Wed. night general meeting from 7:30-9pm. New persons meeting at 6:00. Women's meeting at 6:45. Call 523-7363 for info. (15.32)

#### MAN/BOY LOVE

Intergenerational Love Support Group. World wide news, art, opinions. Application, information free. Bulletin \$1.00 NAMBLA, P.O. Box 174, New York, NY 10018 (7)

## Prisoners Seeking Friends

#### IF YOU WANT PEACE, WORK FOR JUSTICE



#### Help for PWAs in prison and coming out!

A new group called ALLCARE is willing to help prisoners with AIDS and HIV both while they are inside and when they come out. They have a doctor and are willing to make some phone calls to your institution to help you get the medical attention you need. Write them at: ALLCARE, 1576 Sherman St, Denver CO 80203.

#### POETS!!!

The St. Clark's Anti-Poetry Project is a way for prison poets to be heard. They link up prisoner poets with free world poets so that words and ideas can be exchanged. Write Gail Schilke, 163 Ludlow St.—2C, New York NY 10002.

TUMULT offers artistic revolutionary printed works FREE to prisoners. Write them at: PO Box 3092, Orange CA 92665.



Hey wild thing! I'm a gay man looking for someone to be good friends with. I like sex and hot fun. ELIJAH BAKER, 93466, 3001 W. Hwy 146, LaGrange KY 40032.

I'm interested in writing other gay prisoners. In-to B&D, leather and lace. Carl BERG, 67854, ASP, Florence AZ 85232.

Where's the beef? It takes two hands to handle a whopper. Too many people have been scared off when they have got into my jeans. Danny BULLOCK, 148706, 2500 S. Sheridan Rd, Muskegon MI 49443.

I would be glad to see some kind of reading material that isn't biased against gay men and women. I'm a TALL gay man and would like to write a gay man for friendship. My interests include writing poems, reading and fitness. I'm not allowed to receive mail from prisoners. Ronald CAMPBELL, N30537, PO Box 1900, Canton IL 61520.

I would like to write to someone if they would like to write to me. I'm 25 and willing to write anyone. Respectfully, Scott BREIER, 389913, Rt 1 Box 150, Tenn. Colony TX 75861.

In this prison gays are totally dominated and are looked upon as strictly sexual objects. I have seen more than one gay person lose their lives for trying to express independence. So I just keep my lifestyle concealed. So I am lonely and would be grateful if you would put my name in your penpal column. Keith THOMPSON, 109223, Camp J Gar 3R14, LA State Prison, Angola LA 70712

Very lonely GM seeks someone to care for, to grow with, someone that is understanding. I'm an artist, love to read and am into working out in here. I love classical and dance music. Please if you want a special friend, I am here. Charles JOHNSON, 200537 (A-3), 2500 S. Sheridan Rd, Muskegon MI 49442.

MICHAEL AMCKINNEY MOVED !! Penpals, please excuse any inconvenience for I have been moved to the following address: Michael McKinney, 02596-000 Gamma, 902 Renfroe Rd, Talladega AL 35160.

At 31 I am struggling to keep my school boy, or at least college, figure. I enjoy the outdoors, current events, reading and friendship. I desire honesty and laughter and will give the same. Robert BANKS, 531176, Rt 4 Box 1100, Rosharon TX 77583.

## CLASSIFIEDS

## MOVERS

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#### ALL AMERICAN & ELM ST. MOVING

Local or Long Distance Moving. Your belongings handled with loving care and understanding. Discount. 322-7343, 242-0772.



I'm a 26 yr old female. I like corresponding and getting to know people. I have a lot of understanding and am a down to earth lady that has a touch of wildness still in me. Bridgette ELKINS, 120937, Box 26, St Gabriel LA 70776

Please place me in your penpal section. I'm 23, enjoy writing poetry, travel, reading and sketching. Age and looks are unimportant. Friendship is. Bonnie Jean BALLOU, 906-059, Box 535, Jessup MD 20794.



#### LET ME BE FOOLED! (if necessary)

My condition is 24 hours (with the exception of 10 minutes for showers) locked down (isolation) and it's very depressing. I would like to hear from someone, even if they don't care really, just let me be fooled for a while. It's better than nothing at all. Thanks. David ELLIS, 108712, Shark 4R12, LA State Prison, Angola LA 70712.

I came here when I was quite young (for robbery)(attempted) and it is lonely because even though I am gay I keep it to myself, mainly because prison is a frightening, petrifying diffusion of violence and intimidation and I don't want to be forced into anything. I would like to correspond with someone on the outside. Derek ROBERTSON, 92871 Shark 1-L-7, LA State Prison, Angola LA 70712.

GM, 29, seeking someone to talk to. I enjoy reading and sports and will answer anyone who writes me. Prisoners are also welcome. Larry HOWELL, 85353, Box 128, Eddyville KY 42038

GM, 32, looking for a nice long lasting friendship. I have many likes and dislikes. Let's talk. Craig SMITH, Box 94949 (S-3), Lincoln NE 68509



Lonely prisoner would like to make new friends. I'm a member of MACT/BWMT and am interested in ham radio, computers, travel and foreign languages. Please drop me a line. Pat KEARNEY, B-88913, Box 689 Rm Y-307, Soledad CA 93960.

My friends call me 'Lisa Dee'. I'm into reading, jazz and blues and would like to write butch acting men who are into fems and like to play the Daddy. Samuel HANSEL, 99342, Box 128, Eddyville KY 42038.

Bl seeks same. Loving, intelligent, sense of humor, into metaphysics, an explorer. Robert MEARNES, D-89839, Box 8103 (15-18U), San Luis Obispo CA 93403.

I am a 28 yr old gay man, with a past time of writing poems and painting with oils, looking for a true friendship. Terry JOHNSON, 078187, PO Box 747, Starke FL 32091.

Would you be so kind as to put a little note in your gay magazine under prison penpals. I like swimming, boating, most outdoor sports and bowling. Am gay and would like to write same. Kenny NELL, 91277, Box 514, Granite OK 73547.

I need a friend like a junky needs a fix. Someone, anyone who will write to me. I'm 29 but look 19 (I am told by many people). I like all kinds of music and love sex with men and women. Craig SHUMAKER, 35774, Box 2, Lansing KS 66043.

I'm a little on the fem side, however I'm experienced as a top as well as a bottom. I enjoy all sports, music, poetry, walks, and meeting interesting guys. I'm 23, a high school grad. Please write. Alton 'Star' STILLWELL, 95748, Box 128, Eddyville KY 42038.

I'm searching for LESLIE SPINELLI and other (new) penpals to write. I'm a sincere, handsome man, 31. Thank you. Barry EWELL, 058939 (B-69), 500 Orange Ave Circle, Belle Glades FL 33430

I am a goodlooking Queen, age 24, Aries, enjoy writing, reading, music and would like to correspond with someone. I can't write other prisoners. Richard (Ashley) EDWARDS, PO Box B-59740, Florence AZ 85232.

ATTENTION: Big, burley, gd lkg GM seeks anyone who is interested in real friendship. Not into bullshit. I need a caring human friend as much as you do. I'm 6', 240 lbs (I pump iron!) and would like to write someone. David ROBINSON, 209283, Box 150, Delmont NJ 08314.



# Calendar

## 27 Tuesday ☐ Poly Esther.

A Purim play with music and puppets presented by Abe Rybeck and The United Fruit Company. Coolidge Corner Theatre, 290 Harvard St. 7:30pm. Info: 776-2829.

Calendar listings must be received by the Monday before the week of the event. Photos encouraged. Please specify if event is/is not wheelchair accessible and/or sign language interpreted. Please use our format as a guide for listings and put each event on a separate sheet. Listings must be typed. No phone calls, please!

## 24 Saturday

**Boston ☐ Don't Touch That Dial.** An irreverent look at TV. At The Club Cafe, 209 Columbus Ave. 8pm. \$19.50, \$22.50. For info about other show times 536-0972.

**Watertown ☐ GLOW: Gays and Lesbians of Watertown.** Monthly Potluck. All welcome. For more info Becky 395-4664.

**Cambridge ☐ Amethyst Women Square Dance.** Live music, 7 Temple St., 8-11pm, donation. For info 254-8312.

**Boston ☐ AIDS Action Committee,** workshop: "Sex Dating and Intimacy in the Age of AIDS", at The Arlington St. Church, 351 Boylston St., 10am-6pm. For info 437-6200 x298.

## 25 Sunday

**Brookline ☐ Am Tikva: Boston's Community of Gay and Lesbian Jews.** Jewish films followed by discussion "Gefilte Fish", "The Cantor's Son." at St. Andrew's Church for the Deaf, 18 Williston Rd. For info 782-8894.

**Waltham ☐ WOW: Way Out at Waltham.** Bowling trip. 11am. For more info 893-0361.

## 27 Tuesday

**Brookline ☐ "Poly Esther".** A Purim play with music, puppets and actors by Abe Rybeck and The United Fruit Company. At The Coolidge Corner Theatre, 290 Harvard St. 7:30pm. \$7. For info 776-2829.

**Boston ☐ The Buddy Program.** Orientation and training at The Aids Action Committee. 131 Clarendon St. 7:30pm. For info 437-6200 x256.

**Cambridge ☐ Readings by Alice Munro** from "Friend of My Youth". At Wordsworth Books, 30 Brattle St. 5:30 pm. Free, but tickets necessary. For info 354-5201.

**Cambridge ☐ Films at Brattle Theatre.** "James Baldwin: The Price of the Ticket" 8:30pm. "Looking for Langston" 7:30, 10:00. For more info 876-6738.

## 28 Wednesday

**Boston ☐ The Multicultural AIDS Coalition.** Men of Color information group. Come share questions and concerns. Harriet Tubman House, 566 Columbus Ave, 6:30pm. For info 884-2478.

**Springfield ☐ Gayness, Oppression, Homophobia III.** Seminar on bisexuality. At Springfield College, Locklin Hall, rm 233. 7pm. For info (413) 788-3221.

## 29 Thursday

**Boston ☐ GCN Production Night.** All welcome. Proofreading starts at 5pm. Paste-up after 7pm. 62 Berkeley St., near Arlington and Back Bay T-stops. Info, GCN: 617/426-4469.

**Boston ☐ Gay and Lesbian Labor Activist Network.** Organizing for "Walk for Life" and Gay Rights Bill. At Gay and Lesbian Service Center, 338 Newbury St. 7-9pm. For info 282-2509.

**Boston ☐ The Group: social discussion group.** Games and elections for group officers. At The Gay and Lesbian Service Center, 338 Newbury St. 8pm. For info 266-1129.

## 30 Friday

**Boston ☐ GCN Mailing.** Come help stuff the paper and meet new friends. 5-10pm. 62 Berkeley St., near Arlington and Back Bay T-stops. Info: GCN, 617/426-4469.

**Cambridge ☐ Benefit Concert for Boston's Women's Soccer Team.** "Three Stars Rising". At Old Cambridge Baptist Church. 8pm.\$6. For info 426-2723.

**Boston ☐ Artists' Ball** A grand masquerade ball this year's theme: "Tooloose 20,00 Leagues Under the Sea.". At The Boston Center for the Arts-Cyclorama, 551 Tremont St. 8pm-1am. \$17, \$21 at door. For info 787-6979 or 354-0064.

## 1 Sunday

**Somerville ☐ GLOSS: Gays and Lesbians of Somerville and Surroundings.** Monthly potluck at 71 Union Sq. 6pm. For info Lisa 628-2532.

## 2 Monday

**Newton ☐ Lesbian School Teachers/Administrators Potluck.** A group for socializing and support. 6:30pm. For info and directions 864-6964.

**Boston ☐ Three-day conference with Archbishop Desmond Tutu.** Gathering of philanthropists to discuss changes in U.S. welfare system, art funding controversies, etc. At Boston Marriott Hotel/Copley Place. 110 Huntington Ave. April 2-4. For additional info and assistance (202) 466-6512.

**Boston ☐ Tax Resistance Clinics.** Stop putting your tax dollars to war, weapons and intervention. At the Community Church, 565 Boylston St. 7-9pm. For info 731-6139.

## 3 Tuesday

**Boston ☐ Gay Men and Lesbian Support Group for Adult Children of Alcoholics.** Examines being survivor of alcoholic family. At Faulkner Hospital. 8:30-10pm. For info 522-5800 x1908.

**Cambridge ☐ British novelist Fay Weldon** at Wordsworth Books reading from "The Cloning Of Joanna May". At the Brattle Theatre. 5:30pm. Free, but tickets are necessary. For info 354-5201.

**Cambridge ☐ Noam Chomsky Lecture.** To benefit CASA: Central American Solidarity Association, also David Scondras and Cathy Hoffman. At MIT Building 26, rm 100. 7pm. For info 492-8699.

## 5 Thursday

**Boston ☐ GCN Production Night.** All welcome. Proofreading starts at 5pm. Paste-up after 7pm. 62 Berkeley St., near Arlington and Back Bay T-stops. Info, GCN: 617/426-4469.

**Boston ☐ "LaCage Aux Folles."** Part of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual Film Series. UMASS Campus Center. 7pm. For info 545-4824

**Cambridge ☐ Women's community Cancer Project.** Discuss strategies for political action on cancer issues and support services for women who have cancer. At Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St. 7-9pm. For info 489-3806.

**Worcester ☐ Herb Reed and the Platters** "A Night of Nostalgia" to benefit AIDS Project/Worcester, pre-show cocktail party, etc. at Mechanics Hall. 7 pm. \$15-\$50. For info 755-3773.

## 6 Friday

**Boston ☐ GCN Mailing.** Come help stuff the paper and meet new friends. 5-10pm. 62 Berkeley St., near Arlington and Back Bay T-stops. Info: GCN, 617/426-4469.

**Brookline ☐ Am Tikva: Boston's Community of Lesbian and Gay Jews.** Monthly Shabbat Service. At Workmen's Circle. 1762 Beacon St. 8pm. For info 782-8894.

**Medford ☐ Lesbian Lawyers and Legal Workers Meeting.** 7pm. For more info 483-3685.

**Watertown ☐ Association of Lesbian and Gay Psychologists.** General membership meeting. At Simmons College, Main Building. 10am-12pm. For info 492-4401 or 864-7711.

## Weekly events

### Saturday

**Boston ☐ Gay Boston,** with Jim Voltz. Boston Neighborhood Network, channels A3 and A8. 7:30-8pm.

**Boston ☐ Body Electric:** healing with group sensual massage for gay and bisexual men. 551 Tremont. 7:30pm. \$12. 522-9164.

### Sunday

**Boston ☐ Boston Alliance of Gay and Lesbian Youth (BAGLY).** Open to youth age 22 and under. 35 Bowdoin St. 2-5pm. 523-7363 or 1-800-42BAGLY.

**Boston ☐ Metro Healing healing group** for everyone. Metropolitan Health Club aerobics room, 209 Columbus Ave. 7:30-9:30pm. 426-9205.

**Boston ☐ The Gay Dating Show,** WUNR 1600 AM. 10:30pm-2:30am. Lesbians and Gay Men.

**Boston ☐ ALATEEN Group** open to lesbian, gay, and bisexual youth, 22 and under. 338 Newbury Street, rm. 202k. 6pm-7:30pm. Dave, 629-2518 or Frank, 666-8912.

**Boston ☐ Metropolitan Community Church** meets for worship and fellowship at 131 Cambridge Street. 7pm. 437-0420.

### Monday

**Cambridge ☐ Healing Circle** group healing. S Upland Rd. 7:30-9:30pm. \$5 suggested. 864-1989.

**Cambridge ☐ Lesbian Rap.** 3/19 Classism. Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St. 8-10pm. Free. 354-8807 (TTY/voice).

**Boston ☐ Coalition for Lesbian and Gay Rights** holds bi-weekly planning meeting. Les/Gay Service Center, 338 Newbury Street. pm. 776-6956.

### Tuesday

**Boston ☐ Gay Fathers of Greater Boston** meet 1st and 3rd Tues. of the month. Lindemann Ctr., 2nd fl. 8-10pm. 742-7897.

**Boston ☐ Gay and Lesbian Support Group for Adult Children of Alcoholics.** Faulkner Hospital. 8:30-10pm. Intake interview required. 522-5800 x1908.

**Boston ☐ Lesbian and Gay Freedom Trail Band.** No audition necessary. YWCA, 120 Clarendon St. 7:15pm. Kathy, 424-7025 or Gary, 267-6186.

**Providence, RI ☐ ACT UP/Rhode Island** open meetings. Rocket, 73 Richmond St. 7pm. 273-7228.

**Boston ☐ ACT UP/Boston** meets to confront the AIDS crisis. Gay and Lesbian Service Center, 338 Newbury Street, Rm. 203. 7pm. 49-ACT UP.

**Cambridge ☐ Bisexual Women's Rap.** 3/20 Spring Equinox Party. Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St. 7:30-10pm. 354-8807.

**Cambridge ☐ 30-plus Lesbian Rap** 7-8:30pm. 3/20 Coming out to family. The Women's Center (see above).

**Cambridge ☐ Women For Sobriety,** a self help group for women recovering from addictions. Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St. 8-9:30pm. 354-8807

**Arlington ☐ Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays** meets on the second Tuesday of every month at First Parish Unitarian Church, 630 Mass. Ave. 7:15pm. Info: 547-2440 or 508/562-5807.

## Wednesday

**Boston ☐ Boston Alliance of Gay and Lesbian Youth.** Open to youth age 22 and under. 35 Bowdoin St. New persons' meeting 6pm; women and men meet separately 6:45-7:30; general meeting at 7:30pm. 523-7363 or 1-800-42BAGLY.

**Boston ☐ Bisexual Children of Alcoholics.** Mass. General Hosp., lower amphitheater 7:30pm. 259-1559.

**Cambridge ☐ Say it, Sister!** WMBR, 88.1 FM. 7-8pm.

## Thursday

**Northampton ☐ Valley Gay Alliance** meets 1st, 3rd Th. every month, basement of the Unitarian Church, 22 Main St. 7:30pm. 413/527-5310.

**Stoneham ☐ Incest Survivors Group** for women. New England Memorial Hospital, 5 Woodland Rd. 5-6:30pm. Sara Epstein, 979-7025.

**Cambridge ☐ Wise Woman Tradition Herbal Medicine and Women's Wisdom Classes.** Sliding scale. Whitewolf, 277-8232.

**Boston ☐ Boston Area Rape Crisis Center** drop-in group for women who have been raped. 492-RAPE.

**Cambridge ☐ Incest Survivors Group.** Women's Center (see above). 7:30-9:30pm.

**Cambridge ☐ Non-offending male sexual abuse survivors** group meets first Thursday of every month. Cambridge Ctr. of Commerce conference room, 859 Mass. Ave. 8:30-10pm. \$5 donation. 498-9881.

## Friday

**Worcester ☐ AIDS Project-Worcester support group** for HIV positive, PWAs, PWARCs, supporters. Open to all lesbians, gay men. 51 Jackson St. 7-9pm. Dana 508/755-3773.

**Boston ☐ Healing group** for everyone. Santa Fe Hair Salon, 528 Tremont St. 7:30-9:30pm. 426-9205.

## Please note

GCN apologizes to those who submitted listings for this week's "Weekly events" section of the calendar. Our typesetting machine broke down in the middle of production. We'll be sure to put you back in next week.





# Music! Music! Music!

*A look at some of 1989's notable recordings of women's music. Part 2 of 2.*

*Note: Two weeks ago, Caroline Foty presented four reviews of some of her favorite women's music albums of 1989 (see GCN, March 11-17, 1990). This week, she returns with four other notable releases in Part II of her 1989 Women's Music Round-up.*

By Caroline Foty

## Laura Berkson (Brave Ann Music)

In 1988, readers of *Hot Wire*, the women's music magazine, named "Marie" by Laura Berkson one of their favorite songs of the past two years. A lot of people probably said, "Who?" while those in the know were not surprised.

Where has this woman been keeping herself? Rhode Island and Boston, answers her press kit, where she has been very busy working as a teacher and doing a stint conducting the Rhode Island Feminist Chorus. On her debut recording she plays guitar and piano, and shows off a strong soprano with the power of Holly Near's but a velvety smoothness all her own. As a songwriter she has the rare ability to find the personal dimension in political happenings, not shy away from making a point, and make it in an immediate and affecting way.

"To Be Strong" proposes that love and pride are a necessary response to the destruction wrought by AIDS, and suggests that the response is already being made:

This brother is awaiting the time he will be taken  
Now he's seeking refuge from the twisted fright  
And another man who loves him sheds his own fear just to hold him  
And share a moment's safety in his long and restless night...  
...dignity and life can be retained through love and reason,  
The plague we really fight is a disease of the mind.

"Miriam" evokes a Jewish foremother, making a stirring song to sing in the desert of struggle:

Freedom is the ownership of choices  
To choose my future I must know my past  
History gives reason to our voices  
Giving strength to visions that will last  
Miriam it's gonna be a long journey  
Miriam we're gonna need a song  
Miriam it's gonna be a long journey  
And we'll keep moving on

And of course there's "Marie," about two young women in California who got a court order to attend their high school prom together. A gentle waltz flavored by Beth Cohen's violin, the song is sure to evoke cheers wherever it's heard.

Two young women companions took their case from the Salinas High School to court  
Related their story and waited for the judge's report  
He said, "This ticket's for couples, and as far as I can see  
A couple's two people and we don't check ID  
So go on to your dance, let the school deal with me

Take her on out, Marie."

Waltz her around the floor, Marie  
You're dancing for all that you believe

The judge says your presence won't harm any others

Who stand on the sidelines and see, so  
Waltz her around the floor, Marie.

There ought to be an award somewhere for Best Lesbian Song because "Marie" would be a shoo-in.

Berkson's music is melodic and interesting, her lyrics poetic and evocative, whether remembering her musical family background, experiencing new love, or taking back the night. It's lucky for us that the busy Berkson found time to make a recording.

## Carole and Bren — Rainbows in My Mind (Sisters Unlimited)

I wanted so much to love this album. Really. The instrumentation includes cello, guitar, piano, chimes, Aztec drum, gong, Celtic harp, and Tibetan singing bowls. The song titles include "Let Justice Roll," "The Wheel Goes Round," and "Chant For Mother Earth." Carole Etzler and Bren Chambers have been committed to making feminist music for years. Taken together, all of this promises political and spiritual consciousness and beautiful sounds.

Somehow, though, *Rainbows in My Mind* doesn't come up to expectations. The sounds are definitely beautiful, especially when the more exotic instruments join the predominant texture of voices, guitar, and cello. Etzler has a pleasant voice reminiscent of Kay Gardner's on *Mooncircles*, and Chambers plays a lyrical, flexible cello; at their best they have a sound much like *Mooncircles*.

Overall, though the mood of the lyrics and the tone of the music are fairly uniform: relentlessly bouncy and happy. This is unfortunate, because it interferes with the ability of the artists to convey their messages. Their thoughts are hardly superficial, but the constant audible "smile" with which those thoughts are delivered, especially on Side One, makes them sound almost cute. I actually winced when I heard, "...honor gentleness, honor RAGE!" in "The Wheel Goes Round."

Etzler and Chambers are at their best in

the chants accompanied by the percussion instruments. "Cup of the Moon" is adorned with beautiful chimes, and captures something of the peacefulness of observing the moon's phases. "Chant For Mother Earth" is accompanied by the resonant drum. "Chant With Tibetan Singing Bowls" invokes earth, air, fire, and water in words that eloquently and simply express what the elements symbolize in daily life, surrounded by a haunting blend of sounds.

Of the songs, "Let Justice Roll" has the most potential.

We cannot turn away from all we see, and say

"What has this got to do with me?"

Because it's very clear, we've got work to do right here

Until all people live in dignity

Let justice roll on down like water

Like a river to the sea

Let justice roll on down like water

Till every person shall be free

To speak or not to speak, serve the strong

or help the weak

Each day we've got to stand and choose

Then let us say the word to let our voice be heard

Even when we've got a lot to lose

The words have bite, and the melody has passion. But the song delivered more like a babbling brook than a floodtide, and requires that the listener imagine other instruments to fill out the sound. "Take Up The Song" represents a more successful simplicity, and would sound lovely as an audience sing-along. Unfortunately, it is immediately followed by "Now It Begins," with an almost identical melody. "Taste the Water" offers some variety, with a blues sound over a walking bass line — but instead of expressing the menace implicit in the lyrics, Etzler and Chambers keep on smiling.

Perhaps the high level of excellence achieved by so many of 1989's other albums leads me to an overly negative reaction to *Rainbows in My Mind*. Etzler and Chambers are artists of social awareness, but they come off sounding somewhat inexperienced as performers because they fail to project varying moods. When it comes to chants — a very different art — their sound is transformed, and because of the chants the album has to be declared somewhat successful.

Continued on page 10

## INDIGO at NIGHTSTAGE

Thurs. April 12  
DESERT HEARTS  
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KSENIA MACK  
8PM  
\$6.00

Sat. April 14  
JANE SIBERRY  
7:30PM  
\$12.50

Sun. May 6  
LAUGH TILL YOU DROP  
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photo by Susan Wilson

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